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JULY 1974

The Florida Magazine for all Sportsmen

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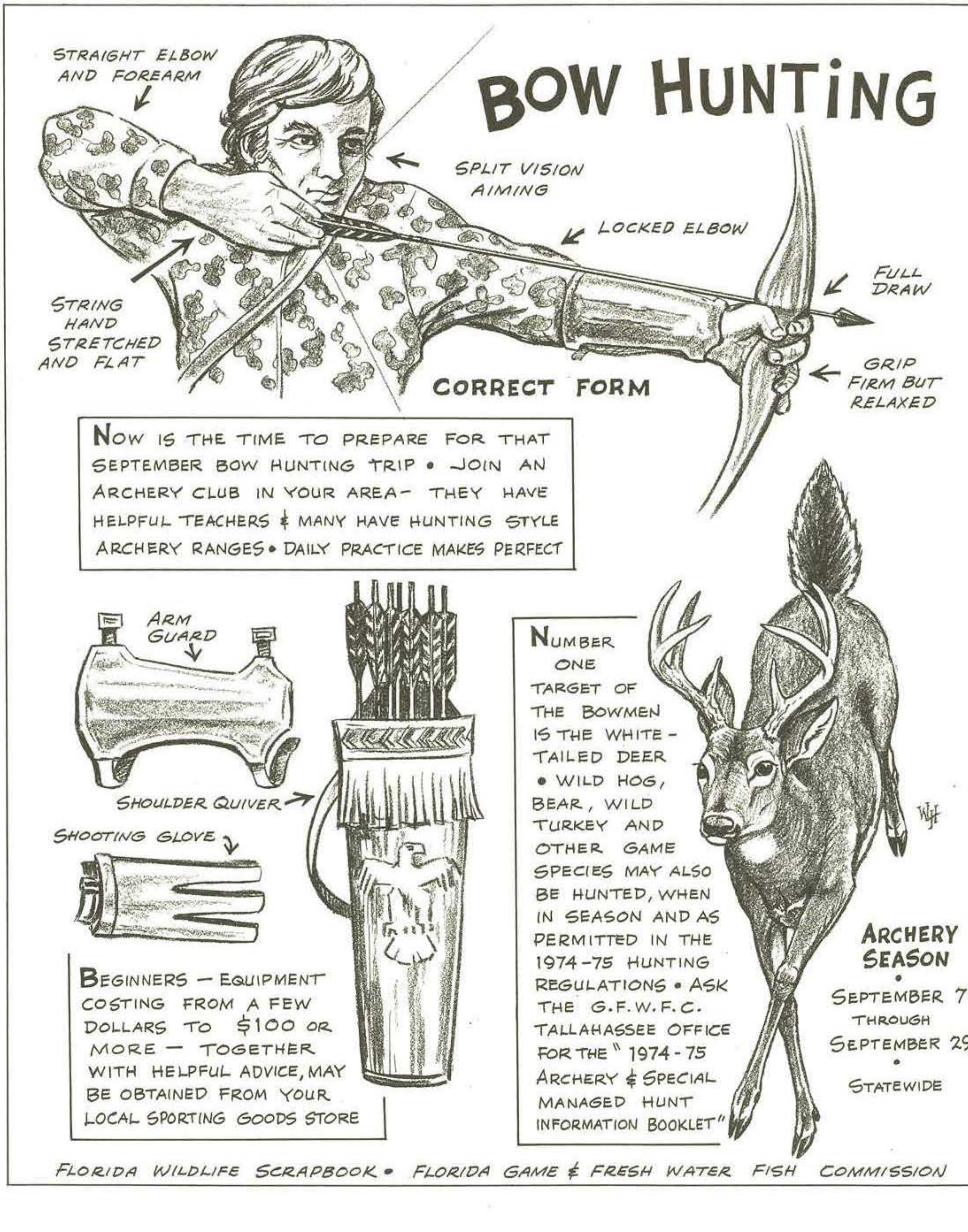

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FLORIDA WILDLIFE SCRAPBOOK • FLORIDA GAME & FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

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The Cover

The alarm note of the Green Heron sounds something like "skeow," and that's one of the local names given this small, shy member of the family Ardeidae, the herons and bitterns. See page 13.

Ektachrome Photo By William J. Weber

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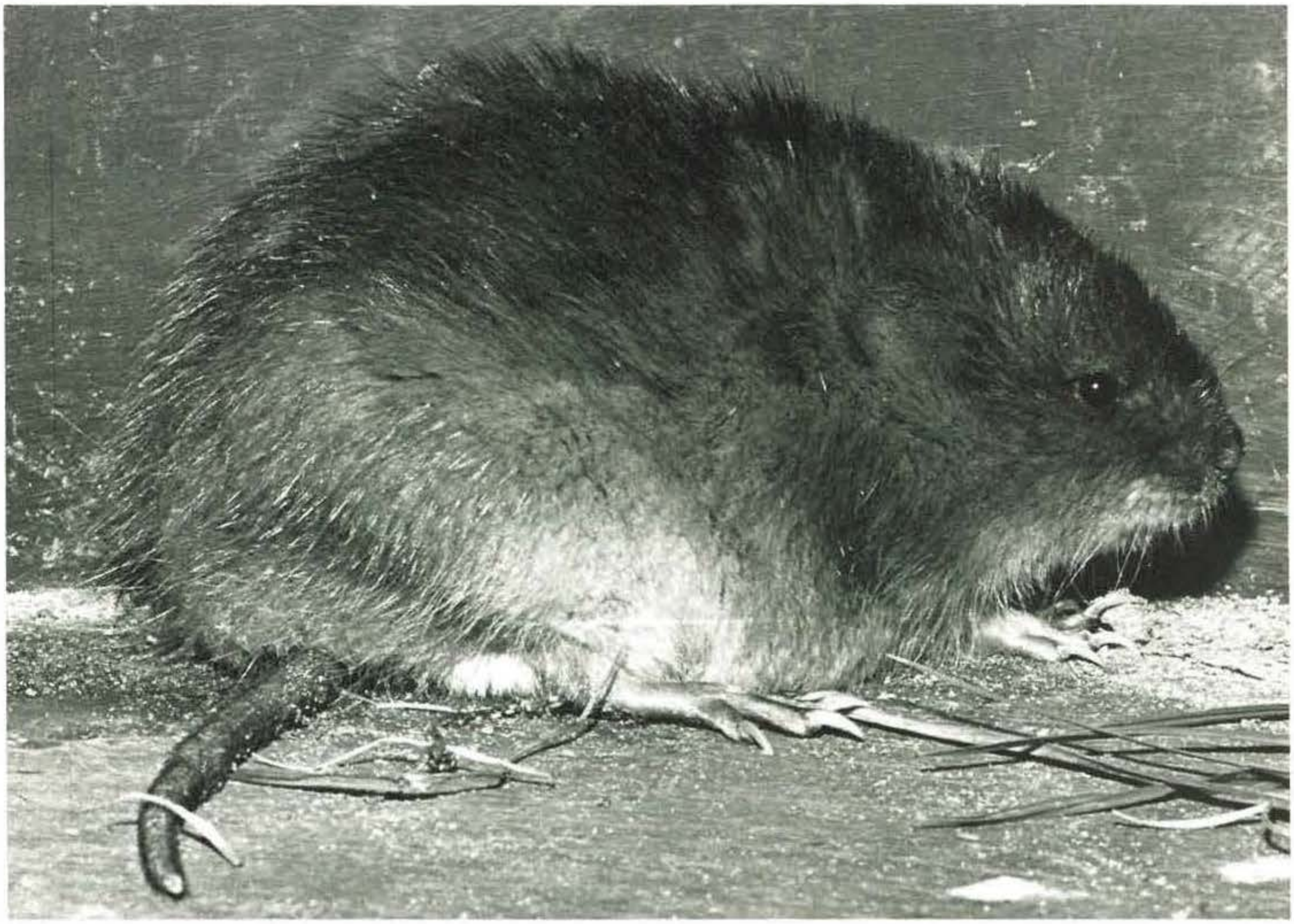

widely distributed in the state,
yet unfamiliar, even to most
outdoorsmen, is the . . .

round-tailed muskrat

TO A BOG HOPPER from most any other part of the country, there are thousands of acres of pond- and lakeside marsh in Florida that appear to be ideal muskrat territory. The only thing wrong is that the muskrats just don't seem to agree it's all that great. As a matter of fact, even though there is no apparent formidable barrier between the present natural range of the muskrat and these potentially bountiful marshes, and despite an attempt years ago to introduce them here, Florida remains outside the range of the species.

But there is a water-minded rodent that occupies at least a fair part of these wetlands. The animal even looks like a scaled-down muskrat. *Neofiber alleni* is this little mammal's scientific name. Round-tailed muskrat, or water rat, is what most of the relatively few people who are aware of the existence of the animal call it.

Almost, but not entirely, confined to Florida, the range of *Neofiber* is reported to extend outside the state only in the Okefenokee Swamp area of southeastern Georgia.

In appearance and habits, the water rat bears a striking resemblance to its larger and much more widely known cousin, the muskrat. At something close to 7 to 10 inches total length for a mature specimen, the roundtail is considerably smaller than even a fair-sized muskrat. In addition to size, to the more or less casual observer the main outward difference between the two species is the tail. The tail of the muskrat is flattened vertically whereas the water rat's tail is round. The tails of both animals are so sparsely haired as to be called naked.

Around the margin of many Florida lakes and ponds is an area of muck which supports a heavy growth of vegetation. This is a favorite haunt of the water rat. The animal is not averse to salt water, and frequently in the salt marshes and coastal savannas some good-sized colonies may be found.

Although for the most part they show a decided

Photos By Wallace Hughes

preference for soggy homesites, drying up of the home grounds for a reasonable period of time does not seem to be catastrophic to a colony. In fact, in the Everglades country especially, the roundtail seems to prefer dry ground. In that area their workings may be seen about gardens and cultivated fields.

Although they are much at home in the water, round-tailed muskrats seldom venture far into open areas. Being on the smallish side, even a good-sized water rat is hardly more than a good mouthful for a small gator or a fair-sized bass.

In its boggy world, the roundtail fills the role occupied by the rabbit and hare in other habitats; that is, the species is a mainstay in the diet of the larger meat-eating creatures that occupy its range. Hawks, owls, snakes, mink, weasels, otters, raccoons, and the rest of the array of predators, large and small, work on the water rat. Small wonder that most of its activities are carried on at night.

The species lives in colonies, similar to the muskrat. A water rat colony is a complex of runways, well-defined and from 2 to 3 inches in width, threading among the vegetation. There are usually numerous escape holes along the runways—entrances that drop below the muck and matted vegetation to give the rat a ready escape hatch in the frequent emergencies that beset them.

A pile of vegetation, like a scaled-down muskrat

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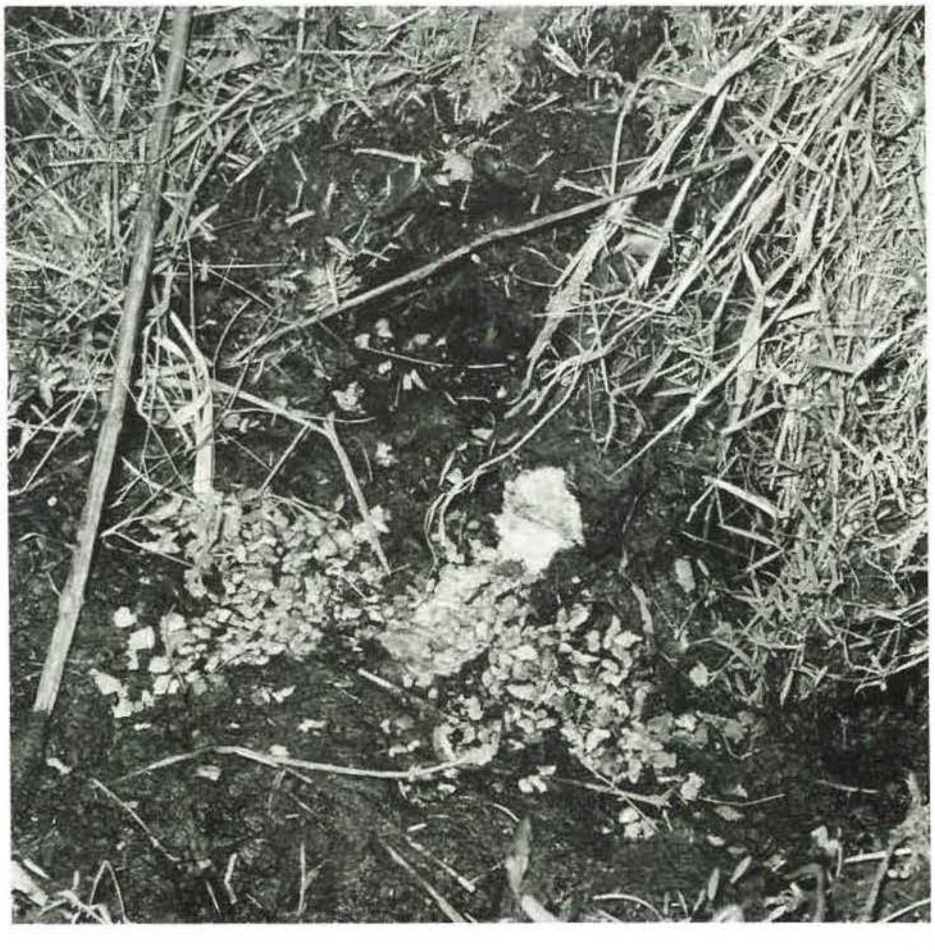
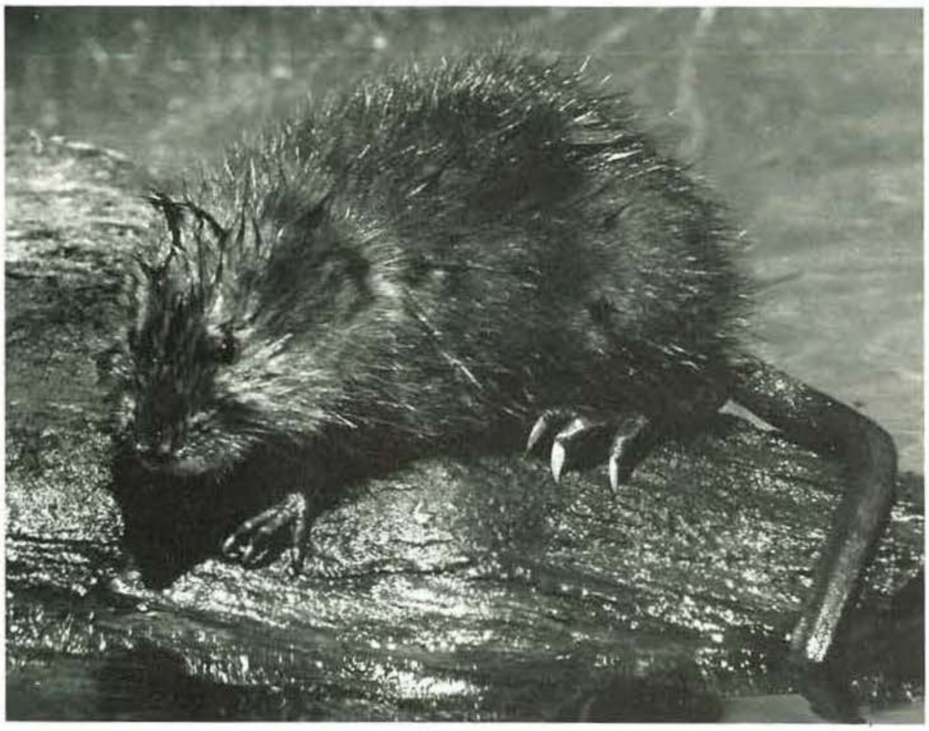
By FORREST HILL

Photos By Morrie Naggiar



Its much smaller size plus round tail are two readily apparent characteristics which separate Florida's water rat, shown in both photos above, from the much more widely distributed muskrat. The two animals are remarkably alike in general appearance and habits, however. At right are remains of a roundtail's nocturnal feast—scattered scraps of marsh plant root.

Photo By Jimmie McDaniel



Favorite roundtail habitat is pond and lake shore marsh. Although accomplished swimmers, the animals seldom venture far into the open water. The muskrat, at right, is a much bigger animal at maturity than the water rat, and has a vertically flattened tail which is more sparsely haired than the roundtail's.

Photo By Leonard Lee Rue III

(Continued from preceding page)

house, is the roundtails' dwelling in typical boggy shore habitat. The house, which may be only a foot or so in diameter, features a central nest chamber slightly above the water level and connected with two or more underground or underwater entrances. Sometimes the rats will plug the entrance holes with mud and vegetation for additional protection against invasion by a hungry hunter such as a mink.

Again like its larger cousin, the roundtail has feeding platforms where the animal retires with choice bits of vegetation that comprise its food. The stems and seed pods of arrowhead, water bonnets, flags, the seeds of arrow-arrums, and other such tidbits comprise the mainstay of the diet. The underground parts of many marsh plants are also important food.

Especially in the more southerly part of their range, young water rats may be born at any time of the year. In the northern part of the state, it appears that late winter and spring is the time when most of the young are brought forth.

Because of their small size and short thin fur, the pelt is not commercially valuable. But the roundtail does fill an important niche in the ecology of its natural community, the boggy marsh habitat. Its natural enemies it can cope with as it has over the centuries. Drainage and conversion to other uses of the marsh habitat on which continuation of the species depends offer the greatest threat to this unique animal.

Not of obvious great economic importance as are white-tailed deer, turkey, and other conspicuous, well-known wildlife, the water rat fills an important but little appreciated role in the scheme of things. Long live Florida's unique mini-muskrat! ●

Fish Speed

it's hard to move a lure too fast for some kinds of fish to hit—if you stir up their interest and the water temperature is right

By **CHARLES WATERMAN**

HOW FAST A FISH SWIMS is pretty important in his choice of food, and any expert with a little spare time is likely to make learned guesses as to how fast they go. It's pretty well agreed that a black bass can get 10 miles an hour, which isn't as slow as it sounds at first, although it is hard to get a bass going in the same direction long enough to clock him.

They say a sailfish can do 70, something I've never really believed, although I have no proof. I don't know how a sail has been clocked unless it was from a light airplane. They can really split the water, but I never thought I'd seen a hooked one make more than 30 or 40. The sail is about as streamlined as a fish can get once he folds his fins into place and makes up his mind.

But when you think of a fish swimming faster than a spooked ringbill can fly, your brain boggles a little. I'm not disagreeing, just questioning.

When the fishing world really discovered the bonefish 25 years ago there were stunned observers with smoking reels who allowed a bone could sift across a Keys flat at more than 60 miles an hour. Since a bone doesn't make many sharp turns when he has his flaps up, and may be in very shallow water, it's possible to judge his speed fairly well, so the current guess of 20 miles an hour is probably pretty accurate. In a few inches of water with the mud boiling behind him, he gives a sort of submerged rocket effect.

I'm a little rusty on physics, but since the fish has to go through the water instead of over it, I doubt that depth has much effect on his progress as long as he isn't extremely deep. Way down there I'd assume the pressures would slow him up. Physicists can send their nasty notes care of FLORIDA WILDLIFE MAGAZINE.

A planing boat will speed up over very shallow water, evidently because the water that's "squoze" down against the bottom gives more lift. Shouldn't have any effect on a fish, because he's not planing. Fast as he is, he's still a displacement hull.

But nowadays speed doesn't help a fish much when he has a hook in his countenance. Time was when the reels blew up, burned out, or froze, but there are all kinds of modern spinning, plugging, and fly reels that will take the hurry, even in very light tackle combinations. You just put the rod tip up and say, "Look at him go!" The drags are good if they're kept in shape.

Maneuverability is what's more likely to bust things, especially if there's something for the fish to hide in. A black bass turns around and goes the other way pretty quickly. He's broad enough to pull hard and turn pretty fast, getting into the bonnets or grass before you can get him coming sometimes, even when you use heavy line. Unless the water is especially clear, topnotch bass fishermen like to give him the muscle these days. It might be hard for an open water angler to imagine anybody breaking 8-pound line on a 5-pound bass, but he

(Continued on next page)

One of the fastest fish, the sail, left, is sometimes given credit for being able to move 70 miles an hour.

(*Continued from preceding page*)

often has to be brought in *now*. Not only must the fish be stopped; he must be headed your way fast enough that he not only can't turn and go somewhere else but can't even swing towards something on the way in.

Even harder to fetch is the snook, which often lives in shoreline roots, stumps, and logs, and nearly always seeks a hidey hole several feet from open water. Thus, efficient snook tackle is likely to seem unusually heavy for the size of the fish sought.

Most of the cover hunters have a lot of power in the first couple of seconds, and none of them are much on long runs. Their power comes in a very brief explosion, and most of them have broad sides. The snook is a bit slender and is thus a rather special case. The bluegill isn't much on speed, but like the other small sunfishes, he pulls hard. His power is expended very quickly. The crappie is a brush digger, but has less steam than the others for his weight, it seems to me.

The salt and brackish water jack crevalle is a digger and a tugger, but also has a lot of maneuverability. A jack appears to turn faster than any other fish I've watched. He'll come for a lure, pass it, and get it going back so fast you're surprised to find the direction the pull comes from—and if you aren't too startled you'll see his "tracks" in his surface swirl after he's already gone. He's expert at grabbing quick baitfishes, most of which do a lot of darting but don't cover much area in their flight.

The jack crevalle, below, is a master of maneuverability, although more noted for his hard tugging.

I know of no freshwater game fish that can actually travel at top speed for more than a few seconds. They are not transients like ocean residents, most of them spending their time in small areas. In open water few black bass will make more than one determined run before jumping or holing up. Atlantic salmon and steelhead may be the best runners of all freshwater subjects, but they got their training in salt water before coming home to spawn. The shad can be quite a runner, but he, too, lives in the ocean most of his life.

Nevertheless, it's hard to crank a lure so fast a bass can't catch it if he feels good and the water temperature is right. Until about 25 years ago, I'd always thought bass invariably preferred slow lures, and many articles have been written telling us we fish too fast for them. Then I went fishing with a guy who trolled a plug at about 8 miles an hour, which would be close to top speed for a largemouth. He caught them, but I'm not saying that's always the best way. Buck Perry, of Spoonplug fame, trolled fast. I don't think there's any hand-operated reel that will take a lure from a bass if water temperatures are right. He's willing to go top speed for a little way.

THE MORE DELICATE MOTIONS of fishing lures escape me, although I've long wondered at the differences in results between some that looked the same to me. The fast-wiggling little plugs that represent shad have come in for a lot of research.

Jim Bagley, who manufactures the Big B, one of the fairly new shad types, was out of my depth within a few minutes of conversation the other day. He told how they checked various designs by reeling them through a swimming pool with observers checking the actions from high vantage points. His Big B is made of balsa and takes a lot of handwork. They have to pass thorough inspection, and that's why a balsa plug will cost you around five bucks.

I watched some tournament anglers checking out those shad imitations and was shaken by the uncompromising way in which they would discard certain models.

The shad plugs are made both in plastic and balsa by various manufacturers. Plastic is less expensive, of course, but the balsa lovers would have nothing else, and will tell you there's a special action.

My own observations of minor differences in lure action have been applied most carefully to wigglers and spoons. For 3 years I have compared two popular wiggler lures over the same waters and with fishermen swapping them from time to time. The difference in action is hardly noticeable to me, but one of the wigglers (spinner and small metal body with porkrind or plastic skirt added) has beaten the other four to one.

Bass boats will continue to be speedy, but new regulations will trim motor size of tournament entrants in some cases.

"Cluckers" aren't very popular right at present; at least you don't hear much about them. They're spinners or wigglers that are worked shallow, generally in weedy waters, so there's a surface disturbance. Some experts go to great effort in "tuning" spinners that work on top, saying that only certain "tones" of splashing will be successful. I've done little spinner bending but have a negative report on the subject. There's one spinner-equipped topwater rig I can't catch anything with, even though it sounds best of all to me.

Such one-way announcements about the efficiency of lures should be taken with salt because most tests, like my own, are conducted on very limited areas. Take the gadgets somewhere else and it might be a different story. I'm very careful about naming names for this reason, although I can be pretty definite about one or two little swatches of bass water. It's doubtful if there are any lures made by reputable manufacturers that have not proven successful somewhere. It wasn't always so.

There is no doubt that the wiggle of a lure produces something akin to sound waves in the water, and "sound" and "motion" are hard to separate when you start investigating fish responses. When some of the original "fish listening" devices came along years ago, I put on the headphones, heard some grass waving in a gentle current several feet down, and realized this was a whole new ball game.

Worst of all, we probably don't appreciate the efforts of some of the most serious and technical researchers. I used to snicker at them myself.

RAY SCOTT, THE CZAR OF BASS, has announced some new regulations concerning the boats to be used in tournaments. Scott's a roaring success at his business, and whether you're pro-tournament or not, you have to admit he runs a taut ship.

Anyway, he says that the bass contestants are faithfully imitated by other bass anglers, and truer words were never pronounced. Half of the bass fishermen you see nowadays are playing tournament, even to illustrated jumpsuits and overpowered bass boats. Sneer if you will, but the tournament boys have put their stamp on the sport, taught us a lot about catching bass, and brought the bass boat, the fathometer, and the electric motor into their heyday. I kid about them sometimes, but I sure respect them.

Scott said that it's dangerous to bolt a 150-horse outboard to a boat made for something a lot smaller. Speed has a place in getting to tournament grounds, but he says it's been getting a little out of hand. Now he says no tournament contestant will be allowed to use a motor larger than that approved on the OBC plate on the boat. This is good dope in light of the energy crisis too. BASS has had no tournament deaths, and they don't want any.

Another thing: The users of stick controls (rather than steering wheels) will be allowed to use nothing more powerful than a 33-horse motor. The stick can be a mite dangerous in rough water at very high speed. Nothing to hang onto if something bouncy happens.

All of this is fine, the same as the catch-and-release program is fine. The tournament fishermen are policing themselves—or maybe Scott is doing it for them in this case. Not that other tournament groups aren't doing good jobs. You hear more about BASS.

WITH ALL THAT'S SAID about how well fish smell and taste, it's strange to find a victim that's gulped a popping bug or small plug so far down that his life is at stake when you try to remove it.

This has always been a source of wonderment to me. I can see why a bluegill will grab a popping bug like money from home, but the mystery is how he can put it clear down his goozle, past his gills, without finding out something is wrong. You'd think he'd at least hold it for an instant in his choppers to find out what he had. It isn't so remarkable where things like rubber spiders or plastic worms are concerned—but plugs and cork popping bugs surely don't taste like insects.

Needlenose pliers can be better than conventional hook disgorgers when you're trying to avoid fish injury. With the pliers you can sometimes approach the problem from different angles. Taking a little more time and being sure to get hold of the barb can simplify things.

I've heard that any gill injury is certain to be fatal. Let's make that *likely* to be fatal, for I've seen some perfectly healthy fish with deformed gills that were obviously the result of old injuries. But if he bleeds much, chances are you're going to have a sick fish on your hands even if he squirts away when you put him back into the water.

Very few of the fish that are killed by lures die immediately. ●

the way it was, and is, in the outdoor world of Florida's Big Bend country is done up in a neat package at the Tallahassee Junior Museum, in an . . .

Outdoor Classroom

"THIS IS THE ONLY MUSEUM in the United States where the exhibits indoors are challenged by the outdoors." So commented John Ripley Forbes, President of the Natural Science for Youth Foundation on viewing the Tallahassee Junior Museum. For anyone interested in outdoor Florida, it would be difficult to argue with that observation.

The museum is located on a 50-acre tract of woodland touching the northwest shore of Lake Bradford, in Leon County, at the southern edge of Tallahassee. That it is fulfilling the objectives advanced by the group of Tallahassee school teachers who first

PHOTO STORY

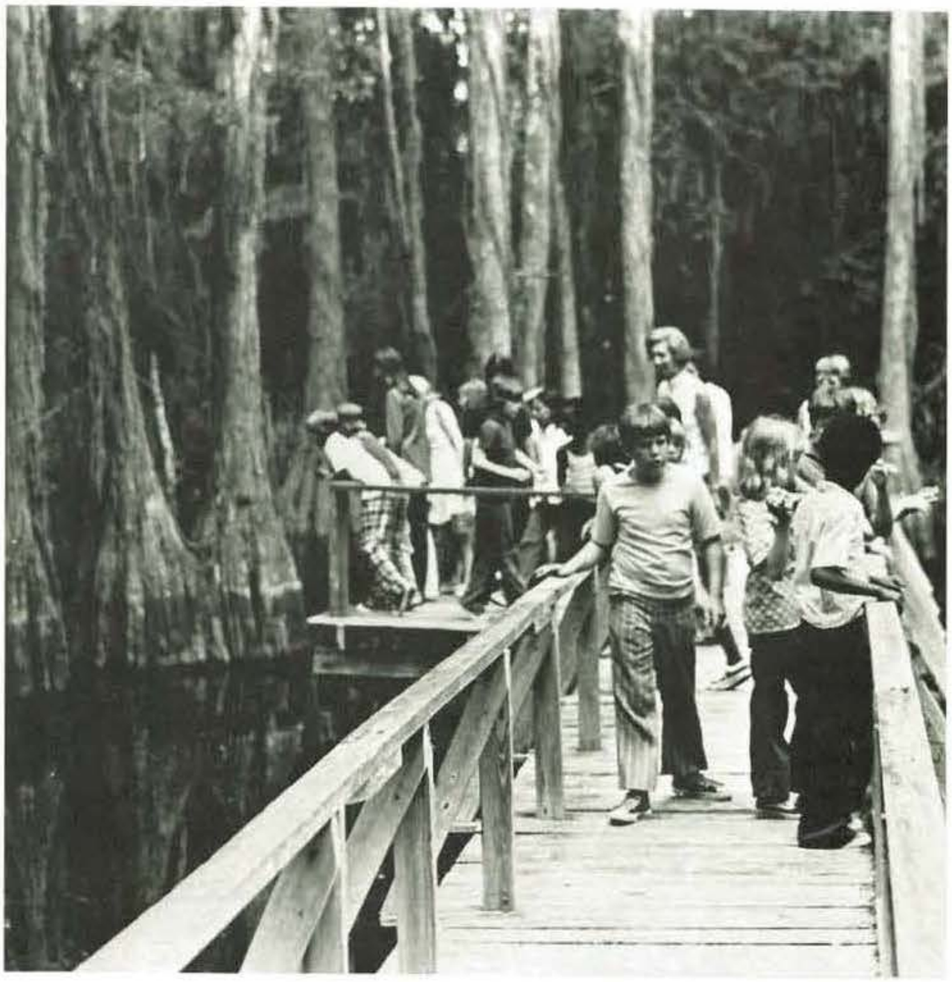
School class, far left, is on nature trail which threads through woodlands. Trail guide booklet and signs note items of special interest. In lower left photo, a mature bald eagle perches atop a pine snag in a large pen located along the nature trail, providing numerous visitors with first close-up view of the national bird. Judy Girvin, at left, talks about one of the Big Bend country's common residents, the opposum. Seeing close up, maybe touching the animal, is bound to make a more lasting impression on a young viewer than just looking at an illustration in a book. Museum has small animal lending "library" for teachers. A hike through a cypress swamp, below, and not a wet foot in the bunch! The raised walkway provides an excellent vantage point from which to view the swamp plant community, and occasionally to catch sight of a furred, feathered, or "creepy-crawlie" inhabitant of the wet world of the north Florida swamps.

(Continued on next page)

conceived the idea of a junior museum for the area, is attested by the parade of school classes that pass through the facility. Here the student can hardly help but find "a better understanding and appreciation of natural science, the social sciences, history, and the world in which he lives."

But the edification of the area's youngsters is not the end of the Junior Museum's contribution to the community. Adults also find it an interesting and informative place. To many residents, a trip to the Junior Museum is a must when showing out-of-town visitors the area's attractions.

By MORRIE NAGGIAR



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Getting an early start in their understanding of the natural world is a class of preschoolers, above. Summer classes are a feature of the museum program, with field trips away from the museum helping to broaden horizons even further. A nature quiz with an extra bonus of fun thrown in is the "know your wildlife" panel, left. A light goes on when you correctly match the creature's name with its picture. It's an old game but always a winner with the youngsters. Below, farm animals typical of those on the area's early-day homesteads enliven the scene at the museum's pioneer farm. For many town-reared youngsters this is a first close-up view of common livestock, and is an impressive experience.

Ducks and chickens, right, are big attractions to many youngsters who have never been in talking range of ordinary barnyard fowl. Even if they have, a different bird is always worth looking at. Tools, machines, vehicles, and buildings of an earlier day, below, are part of the pioneer farm display. Although there is much emphasis on area historical and natural history matters, the main museum buildings house changing exhibits on art, music, and the social sciences as well as natural science and history. A treasure chest lending program features over 100 boxed collections of items relating to geography, natural science, different cultures, and history, for loan to schools in Leon County.

A log farm house, below, originally located at Hosford, west of Tallahassee, was moved to the museum, and forms the nucleus of the pioneer farm. Inside are displayed many of the furnishings and implements of the era, most donated by public-spirited area residents who are interested in helping to perpetuate the region's historical heritage. The farm exhibit is unique in that it is the only full-scale historic restoration being carried on by a junior museum anywhere in the country. Most of the buildings were moved to the museum from their original sites on old north Florida farms. At left below, Annette Naggiar, left, and Karen Robinson, of Tallahassee, rest on the porch of the pioneer farm house in a pose reminiscent of an earlier day in the Big Bend country.

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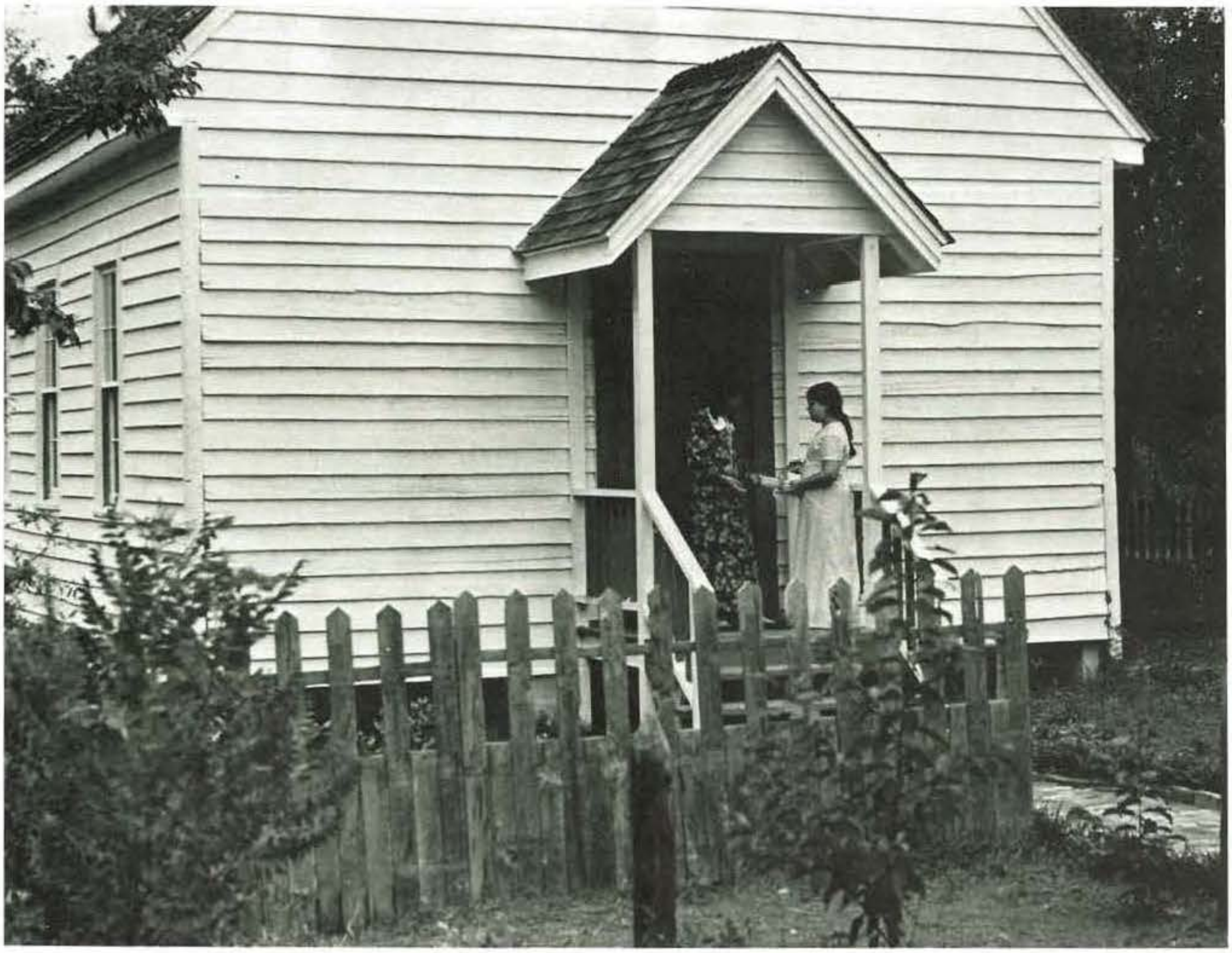

Photos By Morrie Naggiar

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In the scene above, snatched out of the past, two area school girls, Annette Naggiar, left, and Karen Robinson, chat in the doorway of the old Concord schoolhouse. The building was moved to the junior museum grounds from Miccosukee, in northeastern Leon County. In addition to housing display material related to early-day education in north Florida, the school is used for special meetings and talks. Also on the museum grounds is the reconstructed Princess Catherine Murat plantation house, originally located off Jackson Bluff Road in Tallahassee. The Murat tradition is the region's touch with old European royalty. Catherine was the niece of George Washington and widow of Prince Murat of Naples, who fared poorly in early Florida. Black-eyed peas, okra, squash, and other typical food crops grow in pioneer garden, below left, giving many visitors first look at the actual plants that produce familiar vegetables. A school group gathers, below, on museum grounds for guided tour keyed to age group. The 1926 Atlantic Coast Line caboose in the background houses displays commemorating railroading.

the green heron

By MORRIE NAGGIAR

ALTHOUGH ALMOST ANYONE who has dabbled about the marshes and quiet, sheltered waterways of the state has undoubtedly encountered the green heron, the species does not rank high on the list of commonly known birds of the country. Most of the time, the little green hunts alone, seeking crayfish, snails, minnows, and the like in the solitude of the dank, shadowy places.

Now and again a green heron will be seen slipping through the shallows, picking its feet up slowly and putting them down in the most deliberate manner, its whole attitude reminding one of a clock-spring device wound tightly and ready to explode at the slightest touch.

When flushed by an intruder, the bird will frequently give forth a harsh, raucous call. *Skeow* is an approximation of the sound of the peculiar brittle, metallic alarm note. With good enough reason, skeow is one of the common names applied to the bird in some localities.

In the air this small heron, with its broad, rounded wings and its deliberate wing beat, reminds one of a slow-flying crow. Like other members of the heron-bittern family, the *Ardeidae,* the bird flies with its neck drawn in and legs extended.

The breeding range of the green heron is large. It is found completely across the United States and into southeastern Canada. Southward, nesters are found into Guatemala and Honduras.

The herons are not noted as careful nest builders, but this species goes the tribal reputation one better, simply throwing together an even more casual collection of twigs, reeds, and weed stems than the other species of the group. The jumbled collection of plant stems and twigs does have a semblance of a hollow in the center, where the eggs are deposited. Low bushes or trees near or over the water are the usual nesting sites.

Greens may nest in a small loose colony, or at the edge of a rookery containing nests of other wading birds, but isolated nesting is not uncommon. This is in keeping with its tendencies toward a solitary way of life.

Photo By Jake Johnson

In Florida, the usual clutch of three to five bluish colored eggs are laid sometime between late March and the first of June. The incubation period is about 18 days. The young herons are fed by regurgitation, and they remain dependent on their parents for a considerable period. Long before they are ready to leave the nest, they become remarkably adept at climbing about in the nest tree or bush. It would be stretching a point to call their efforts agile as they struggle about the branches using neck, wings, and bill as well as the feet, but they do move about, especially when threatened by a potential enemy.

Because of the poor lighting conditions that prevail in many of the shaded locations where the green heron is likely to be encountered, the reason for its common name is not always readily apparent. But in good light its blackish green crown feathers and the greenish cast to the back and scapulars are obvious enough. The photo on this month's cover shows this characteristic color clearly.

The green heron has a head crest which the bird is able to raise and lower at will. The white chin and throat and the breast with its white streaking are other identifying marks. Size is also a recognition feature, for this smallest of the Florida herons measures only 15 to 22 inches in length and has a wingspread of about 2 feet or slightly more.

The green heron winters throughout most of the state, but is much more common during the cooler months in the more southerly reaches. ●

G. U. Parker Wildlife Management Area

FLORIDA'S PANHANDLE HAS 13 wildlife management areas within its bounds. All of these offer fine hunting and recreational opportunities with a minimum of hunting pressure. Perhaps the most interesting to the all-around sportsman is the 17,000-acre G. U. Parker Wildlife Management Area.

"The Parker," as it is called locally, is located in Gulf and Calhoun counties, about 25 miles east of Panama City. Its most unusual feature, and a principal reason for its attraction to sportsmen, is the fact that it is almost surrounded by water. On the west are the Dead Lakes of the Chipola River, while the Apalachicola River marks its eastern boundary. Only on the north and south does the area border on land, and even this is minimized in the north by the presence of Brown Lake, actually a tributary slough of the Apalachicola River.

There is a broad diversification in the topography and forest growth on the area. On each side, cypress stands blend into river swamps which slowly edge up a gentle slope, blending into a mixture of second growth pine and hardwoods. Near the crown, which runs roughly down the center of the area, the cover is principally high pine flatwoods.

Underlying this large growth is an understory of palmetto, gallberry, smilax, wiregrass, and a very generous portion of poison ivy and blackberry bushes. This striking array of cover provides habitat for an equally impressive variety of wildlife, including deer, turkey, squirrel, quail, and wild hog. Ducks also occur on the area in some numbers. Of equal interest, particularly to the camera buff, is the number and variety of nongame birds which make their home on the Parker.

Because of its size and physical location, the Parker is ideally suited as a still hunt area. Historically, deer hunting in this part of the state is done with hounds, and the majority of management areas are keyed to this sport. There is, however, a growing number of sportsmen who, for one reason or another, cannot or do not hunt with dogs. In several areas, Point Washington, for example, parcels have been set aside for still hunters. The Parker, though, is the first in northwest Florida, and the largest in the state, to be set aside exclusively for still hunting.

The land occupied by the Parker was known for its fine fishing and hunting long before it was incorporated into the management area program. In fact, the area was originally the site of a state fish refuge. Known as the Brown Lake Refuge—after the lake located in the northeast part of the property—the 22,000 acres around the lake were set aside in 1936 as a natural hatchery and refuge for fish. Because of this, and the concern of the landowner for the wildlife on the area, the property was closed to hunting and fishing. Negotiations between the Neal Land and Timber Company and the Commission resulted in the addition of a portion of the property to the management area program.

Photos By Jerry Girvin

A number of logging access roads such as the one shown in the photo on the opposite page, although closed to motor vehicles, allow the bicycle-riding hunters to penetrate area on wheels. The periodic burning of the dense understory makes new browse available to wildlife, and has resulted in steadily improving game habitat, above photo. The burning out of dense, leathery growth of the old understory plants encourages new growth, to benefit of the white-tailed deer and various other wildlife.

By JERRY GIRVIN

The new area was opened to sportsmen for the first time in the fall of 1969.

Since that first year, there has been a cooperative program between the Commission and the Neal Land and Timber Company to improve the hunting on the area. James Parker, son of G. U. Parker and operational vice president of Neal, has initiated and carried out a number of improvement programs. Controlled burning of underbrush is an excellent example of his efforts. This tool, simple but effective, is recognized by wildlife biologists as one of the best ways to improve the habitat on Florida timberlands. The annual or biannual burning of the heavy understory creates fresh browse for wildlife and promotes the growth of quail food plants.

Neal has adopted a policy of burning on a rotational basis, utilizing their own equipment and personnel. The result is a steadily improving game habitat which is reflected in an increasing game harvest during successive hunting seasons.

The Parker area is open throughout the season for both general hunting and for the longer squirrel and quail hunt. Squirrels, in particular, thrive in the hardwoods of the area, and it is a favorite hunting spot for those seeking the bushytails. The area is also open during the archery season.

Hunting pressure has been low, totaling only 1,070 hunter-use days during the past season, for example. The success ratio was good, with these few hunters harvesting 57 deer, 25 hogs, 1 turkey, 735 quail, and 60 ducks. The duck figure is probably lower than the actual harvest because the primary waterfowl gunning areas are on the Dead Lakes, outside the boundaries of the management area.

The Dead Lakes themselves are deserving of special attention, not only because of their waterfowl potential but because of the excellent fishing. The lakes are part of the Chipola River. The natural rise and fall of the water level created a highly productive habitat for fish, and the area has long been known for its excellent fishing. In 1962, the Dead Lakes Water Management District dammed the

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Photo By Gene Smith

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Chipola at the lower end of the lakes, stabilizing the water level. A brand new water control structure will now permit the lakes to be fluctuated artificially, which should improve fish habitat and fishing.

The lakes cover some 3,655 acres and are strangely beautiful, with dark waters studded with the snags and stumps of countless cypress trees. These waters are readily accessible by virtue of a number of public ramps and the half dozen fish camps and lodges which sprinkle the shoreline.

The Apalachicola River, less than 2 miles from the Dead Lakes, at the south end of the area, also offers a variety of fishing challenges. Fly fishing for bream is popular, as is trying for some of the less common species of fish, such as striped bass and sturgeon.

On the management area itself there is Brown Lake, mentioned earlier, which affords prime fishing because of its attraction to fish as a bedding area.

Fishing is good the year around, so that a sportsman might plan a summer vacation to enjoy some fine fishing and swimming with the family, as well as to take the opportunity to drive the area and look for tracks and other game signs. Later, during the hunting season, a few hours' fishing could well provide a happy addition to camp fare and some pleasant memories.

Camping is not available on the management area. However, the proximity of the Dead Lakes fish camps affords a large number of cabins and lodges. These vary in luxury and price, and all are within short driving distance of the area entrance gate. There are several campgrounds in the vicinity, such as the newly opened Dead Lakes Recreation Area operated by the Recreation and Parks Division of the Department of Natural Resources.

There are facilities for tents or mobile campers, including such amenities as rest rooms and showers, covered eating areas, and running water at each campsite—no more toting the bucket for the camp cook! Bookings will be slack at most lodges during the hunting season, but a letter to the Gulf County Chamber of Commerce, at Port St. Joe, might be in order if you want to get a list of the accommodations available and establish your reservation now.

Travel within the area is limited to a very few roads. These are principally the county road which runs north and south the length of the area, and a number of lesser roads which lead off to the river swamps on either side. While this initially sounds restrictive, a tour of the area will soon set the visiting sportsman at ease. The long, narrow boundary of the Parker Area makes it feasible to park on the main grade and still hunt to the boundary with ease.

This physical make-up and a number of logging access roads which are closed to vehicles make for a sight seen on few hunting areas in Florida. The south Florida sportsmen may have their buggies and airboats, but the practiced Parker Area hunter has his bicycle. Neal Land and Timber has a policy of constructing and maintaining first rate roads, and bicycles provide ideal transportation for a still hunter. Many will be seen cycling silently down these access roads scanning the woods, rifle slung on shoulder. Shades of Daniel Boone!

The G. U. Parker Area is open year round for

Photos By Jerry Girvin

recreational pursuits—fishing, picnicking, hiking, bird watching, or just "going to the woods." During the spring and early summer, visitors may possibly encounter a few minor hazards. These are the thousands of bees which are moved into the area by apiary operators to take advantage of the tupelo bloom. Groups of 20 to 120 hives are scattered throughout the area. Visitors should not approach an apiary too closely. Bees don't take kindly to inquisitive folks.

Bucks, boars, bikes, bees, birds, bass, bream—the G. U. Parker Wildlife Management Area offers them all, as well as a splendid hunting adventure for the archer or still hunter who likes the excitement of a new area and a minimum of hunting pressure. Years of cooperation by the Commission and the Neal Land and Timber Company have resulted in a truly interesting hunting and recreation potential for Florida's sportsmen.

The Parker is an area which, like most of Florida's privately-owned management areas, is made available to the sportsman at some cost to the landowner. Unlike many states, Florida does not favor these contributing property owners with special tax relief or reductions for their cooperation. In fact, to many participants such as Neal, the added programs of road maintenance and controlled burning actually cost the cooperating property owner.

If, in addition to this expense, owners have to bear the mounting costs resulting from vandalism to property and equipment, wildfires, and cleanup, they are contributing a considerable sum of company or personal funds to the sportsmens' pleasure. Whether you visit the Parker or any other wildlife management area, remember you are actually in the same position as an invited guest. Respect the owner's rights and property—make sure you have a place to "go to the woods" next year also! ●

Bridge at Dead Lakes Dam on Chipola River, lower left, is a favorite spot with shorebound fishermen, though there are miles of top water available to anglers with boats. Tupelo honey is a major product of region, and a visitor in late spring-early summer period will see scenes as in above photo throughout the area. The Dead Lakes campground, right, is operated by the Department of Natural Resources, and offers complete facilities for camping enthusiasts.

This is No. 2 in a series of articles on Florida Wildlife Management Areas. Maps and current regulations covering individual areas are published annually by the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, 620 S. Meridian Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32304.

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2

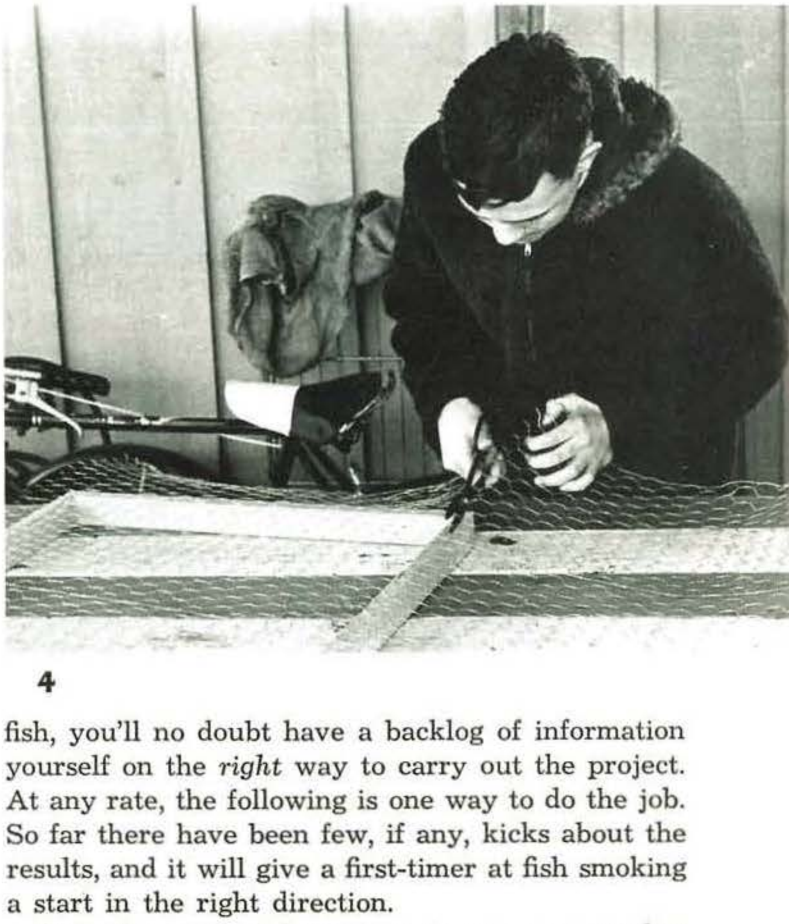
for a fun project that yields a bonus of
good eating, try....

Fish Smoking

WHAT PART OF THE COUNTRY you are from has a lot to do with exactly what you mean when you talk about smoking fish. As generally practiced here in Florida, fish smoking is what we used to call kippering out in the Northwest of my younger days. It is a mild smoking, or smoke cooking, process intended to prepare fish for immediate use. This is in contrast to hard smoking, or smoke drying, which will preserve fish for a considerable period without refrigeration.

Most often, when a Florida fisherman talks or thinks about fish smoking he has mullet in mind. The mullet *is* admirably suited to the purpose: tasty in most any form, readily available, and sufficiently oily to smoke well. But, properly handled, most any of the common fish of either ocean or inland waters lend themselves to the smokehouse treatment.

Like a lot of other things in the outdoorsman's world, there is a great diversity of opinion on the subject. After you have done a batch or two of fish, you'll no doubt have a backlog of information yourself on the *right* way to carry out the project. At any rate, the following is one way to do the job. So far there have been few, if any, kicks about the results, and it will give a first-timer at fish smoking a start in the right direction.



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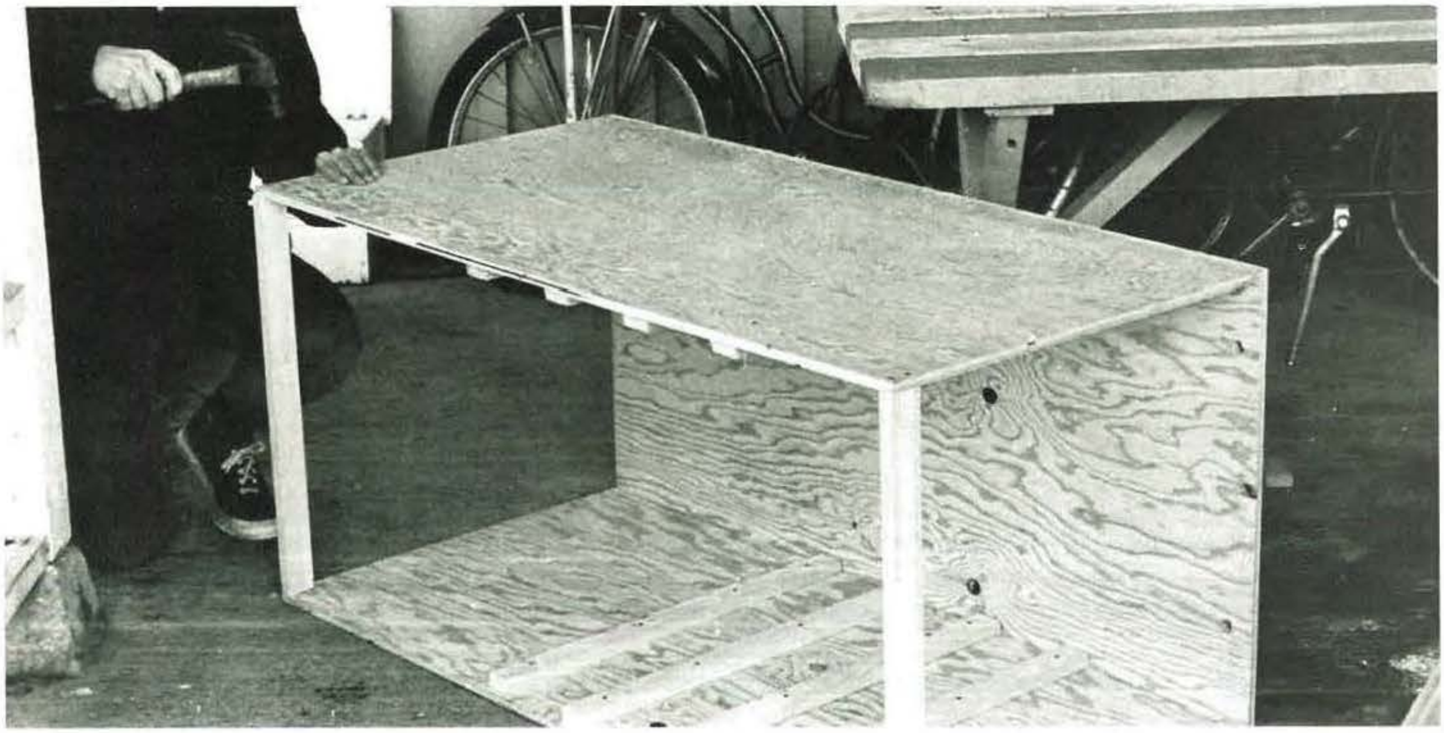
Over the years, I have seen in use as a smoker such diverse devices as a converted chunk of culvert pipe, a notched-log enclosure resembling a small cabin, a canvas-covered pole frame, wooden barrels, metal drums, a large packing box, discarded refrigerators, and a board-and-batten backhouse-looking affair, to mention a few.

A word of caution: If you use an old refrigerator for a smoker—and this is not infrequently suggested in smoking discussions—be sure to remove the



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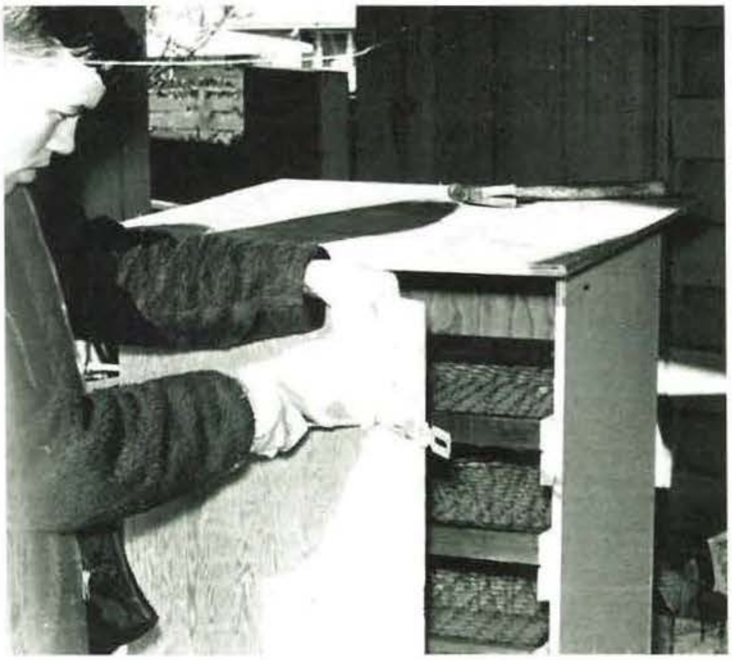

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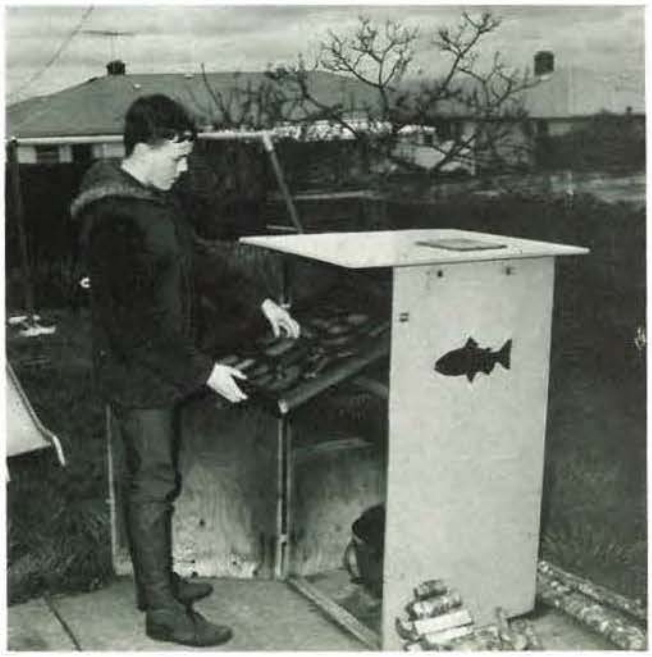

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Photos By Morrie Naggiar

1. Don Naggiar, using pencil and square, lays out his smoker before cutting plywood panel. Box will be 2-ft. x 2-ft. x 4-ft. 2. Smoking tray support strips, of 1 x 2, are nailed to inner surface of two sides. 3. The use of ½-inch plywood or heavier, eliminates need for frame. Pieces of 2 x 2-in. lumber tie box together at top and bottom of front. 4. One-inch mesh poultry netting is used for flooring bottom of the wood frame fish tray. 5. Hasp will help keep door tightly closed to prevent smoke and heat from escaping too fast. 6. The holes are bored low on side for air intake, and just under overhanging top to let smoke escape after circulating over the fish. Tape over the holes controls temperature and rate of smoking.

By **MORRIE NAGGIAR**

plastic liner and insulation. It is reported that heat releases noxious fumes from the plastic lining, not only ruining the taste of the fish but posing a real health hazard. The cadmium plating on some refrigerator racks also poses a threat, as the fish could absorb the highly toxic metallic material. Aside from this, an old refrigerator looks just like what it is, an old refrigerator—not especially decorative sitting in the yard or on the patio.

One of the most satisfactory smoker boxes I have tried is a simple plywood box with hinged door and an open bottom. It is light enough to move about easily, can be painted on the outside to make it more eye-appealing, is of uncomplicated construction (thus can be put together in a short time), is

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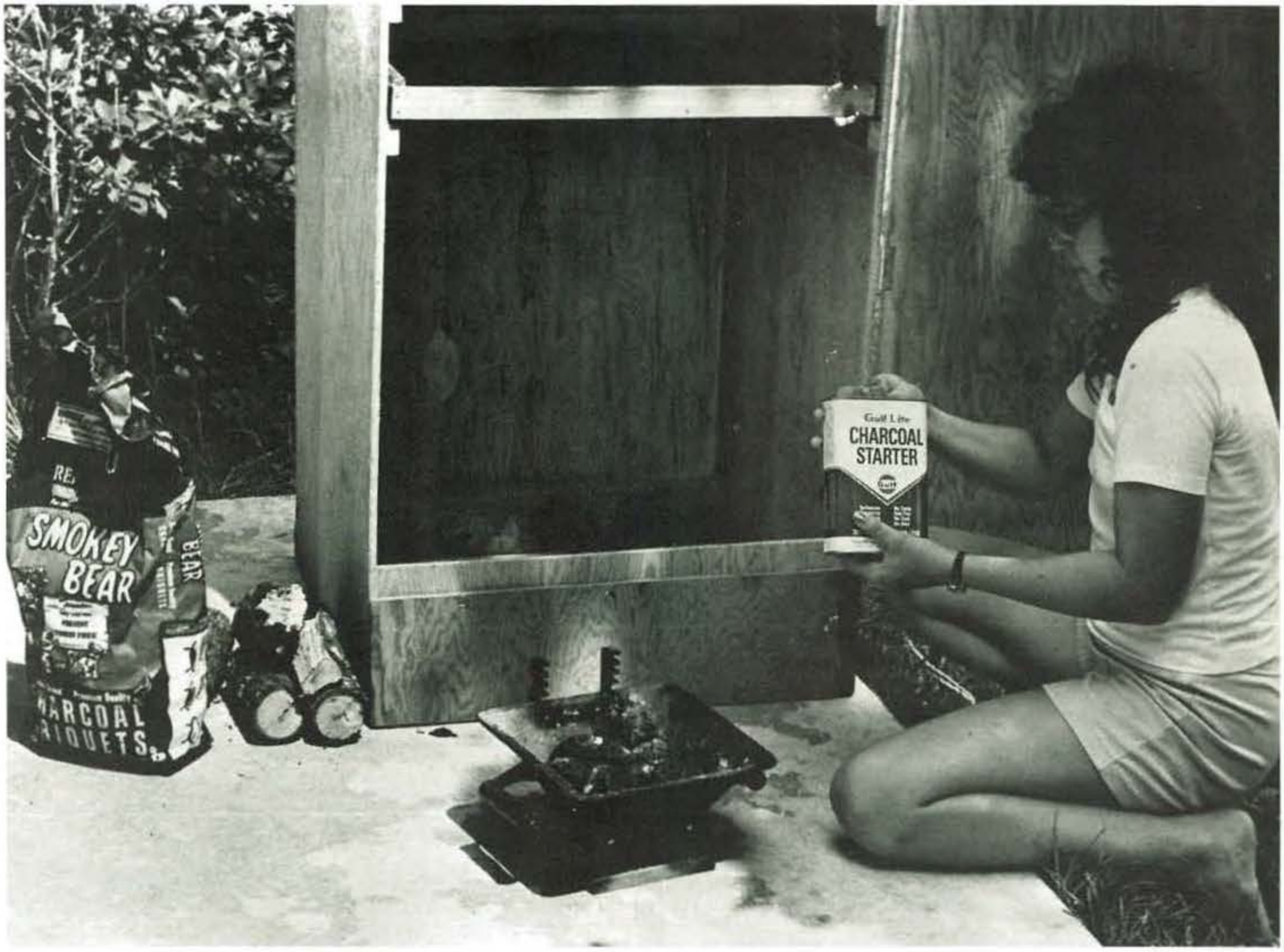

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made of readily available materials, and gives excellent results.

Anyone who has an accumulation of odds and ends of plywood and other building materials stashed around the place could probably put together a smoke box without spending a dime on the project. Having just recently moved, and being without a handy material pile to draw from, I tackled the project of building a smoker from scratch, buying everything needed at regular retail prices. The completed smoker cost just under $30.00.

Reference to the illustrations will reveal details of this type of simple construction project. If you use ½-inch or thicker plywood you can probably get by with no more framing than the two pieces of 2 x 2 which join the front top and bottom of the box as shown in one of the construction photos. Exterior plywood, especially when painted on the outside surface, will resist the onslaught of the weather for a long time.

You will need a fire box of some sort to contain the fuel which produces the required heat and smoke. A cast iron "cooking kettle" barbecue device, with adjustable draft, served the family's fish smoking projects for years. Lately, I have been using a small hibachi for the purpose, and it does an admirable job. It was picked up at one of the chain stores for less than five dollars.

A convenient way of handling mullet and other medium-sized fish is to butterfly fillet them. The fish is cut down the back along one side of the backbone, severing the ribs but leaving the belly flesh uncut so the two halves stay together. Remove head, clean out the body cavity, including the black lining, wash, and allow to drain.

Photos By Morrie Naggiar

Small hibachi makes good fire pot. The smoker that daughter, Annette, is preparing to stoke up, in photo above left, is a foot taller than the one in other photos. It varies somewhat in construction details, but general plan is same. Plenty of smoke and not too much heat, bottom left, give best results. Larger fish, above, are best handled by cutting into chunks. Six to eight hours is usual time for smoke cooking most fish but time varies with thickness of fish and the temperature.

On larger fish, fillet, removing the backbone, and cut into convenient size chunks, say 5 or 6 inches long and 4 inches or so wide.

One way of keeping fish, outside of freezing or refrigerating, until it is convenient for you to smoke them, is to put them down in salt. Although you'll find advice to the contrary, ordinary fine table salt is adequate for the purpose. Using a ceramic or glass crock, plastic bucket or dishpan, enamelware vessel, or other non-corrosive container, put down a layer of salt, add a layer of fish, cover with salt, add more fish, and so on, in alternating layers. Don't spare the salt; you can't use too much.

For a large batch of fish I have used pickling salt, feed or mixing salt, and rock salt, all of which are cheaper than table salt, and do the job. The word is to use non-iodized salt. I am not sure just why, unless the iodine imparts an off-flavor to the fish. I have never felt like taking the risk of spoiling a batch, so have stuck with this idea, which may or may not be just another fish smokers' notion that's been handed down through the years.

Salting will keep fish indefinitely, even during warm weather. Before smoking, however, you will need to freshen the fillets. To do this, first thoroughly rinse the loose salt from the fish, then put them to soak in fresh water. Change the water several times during the 12 hours or so it requires to adequately draw out the salt.

After the first few hours, it is a good idea to keep a close watch on the progress of your desalting. Especially in warm weather, as the salt leaches out, the fillets will be subject to spoiling just as though they were completely fresh. You may find it advisable to remove the backbone from fish to be salted. Sometimes a concentration of salt under the backbone may not be drawn off sufficiently during the soaking, making the finished product too salty for most tastes. As in other details, experience will be your best guide.

Blot the pieces dry with paper towels, and slip them into the smoker skin side down and arranged so they are not touching one another. I like to give them an initial sprinkling of salt at the start and then another sprinkling or two before they are done. It is a good idea to put the thicker pieces on the lower tray where they will get the most heat.

One way of giving a different taste to your smoked fish involves marinating the fillets in spiced vinegar for 12 hours or so before smoking. For each pint of vinegar, add 1½ ounces of pickling spices. Bring to a boil, let simmer for about 5 minutes, remove from heat, and add an equal volume of cold water. Cool the solution to 75°F. or less. Add a heaping teaspoonful of salt for each pint of solution, and immerse the fillets for the prescribed time. Rinse off the pieces in fresh water, before putting them into the smoker.

Charcoal briquets make a convenient fuel for the smoker, and are easy to keep burning. Chunks of green wood, or dry wood that has been soaked for an hour or so in water, give off the required smoke.

In the matter of smoking wood, some of the old hands along the mangrove coastal areas show a decided preference for mangrove and buttonwood. Some of them even go so far as to say other woods are not suitable. I have not found this to be true, and use either hickory or oak by preference. Alder and maple are among the other woods that are also excellent for the purpose.

When you first stoke up the smoker you will probably find that you will need to feed the fire a fresh supply of briquets and wood about once an hour. Later, as the cooker gets thoroughly heated it may go for an hour and a half or more without needing attention. Keep the heat down, using only enough briquets to assure a steady production of smoke from the chunks of wood. You should, of course, take precautions to keep your firebox away from the wooden walls of the smoker, watch for excess dripping of fat into the fire, and otherwise take steps to prevent the smoker box from catching on fire.

Depending on the thickness of the fish and how much heat your burner puts off, smoke cooking will usually require from 6 to 8 hours. A basting 2 or 3 times during the proceedings, using melted butter in which a liberal amount of garlic powder has been mixed, gives an extra boost to mullet, and will definitely make the drier fish such as largemouth bass more moist and flavorful. ●

Suwannee River State Park

When you've seen all the bright lights, made all the big attractions, and heard all the traffic noise you can stand, I can recommend a place for putting yourself back together before winding up your Florida vacation. If you're heading north from downstate, chances are it won't be much out of your way either.

On the banks of the placid Suwannee River, just west of the town of Live Oak, on the north side of Interstate Highway 10 and U.S. 90, lies one of the loveliest of Florida's many recreation spots—Suwannee River State Park. It covers some 1,800 acres of interesting woodlands, waters, and historic ramparts, and is certainly in character with the famed melody by Stephen Foster about its main feature, the "Swannee" River. Here the pace is slow, the atmosphere restful, the natives soft-spoken and friendly.

All of the usual amenities of a good public park are available at Suwannee State Park—shaded campsites, with or without electricity; clean rest rooms; hot showers; covered pavilions for family picnics; playground equipment for the kids; nature trails; a boat ramp; and much wild animal and plant life to be photographed and enjoyed.

An unexpected, and delightful, feature is an icy creek for old-time swimming and wading. If spring-fed Limesink Run doesn't cool your cares away, you're too far gone to be helped—unless a refreshing dip in Falmouth Spring, a couple of miles away, will do the trick.

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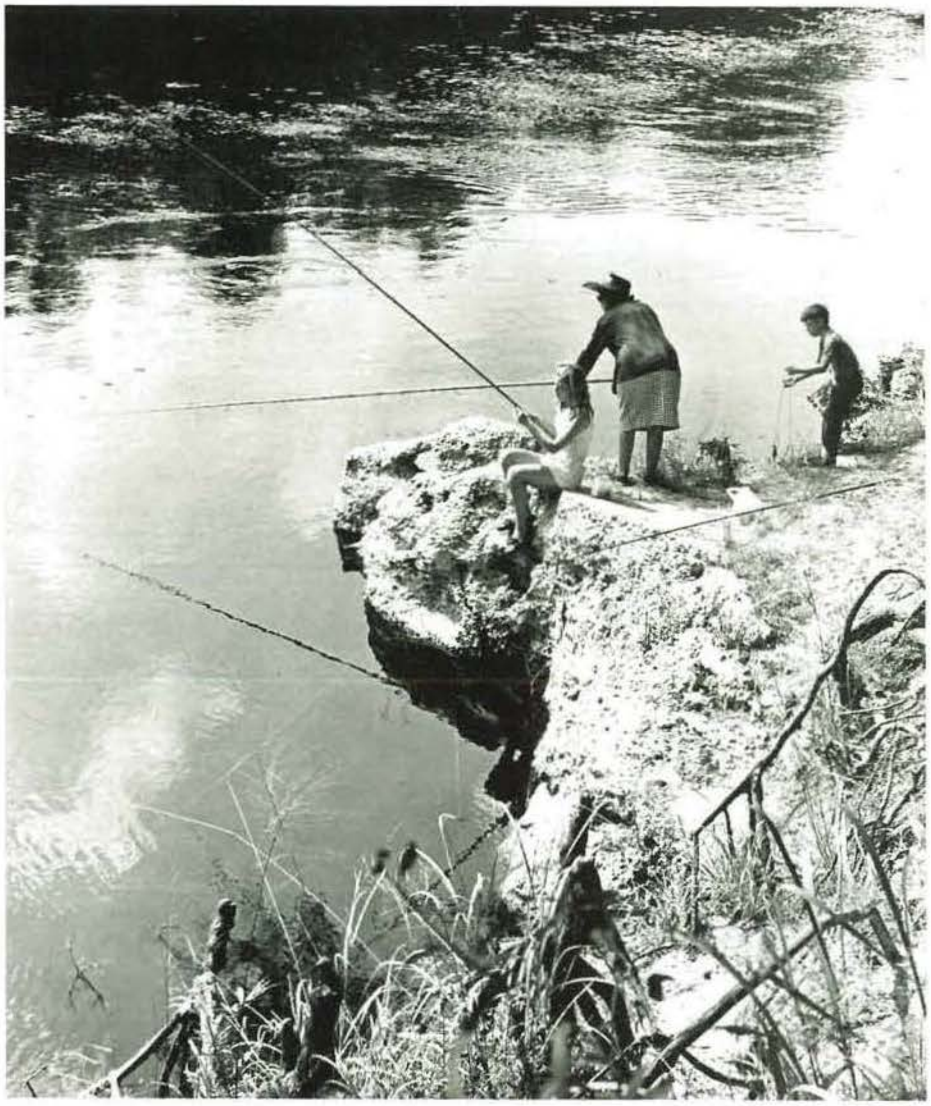
By GENE SMITH



Visitors to restful park on the Suwannee can choose their own favorite way of relaxing. "River watching," left, is No. 1 attraction, and pole-and-line fishing is also popular. A dip in creek or Falmouth Springs, below, is fun for the children.

Photos By Gene Smith

Canoeists, left, may launch in the park and ply two rivers, not one. Going over the side for a swim is not routine, but some enjoy it. Confederates defended a railroad here, history buff, below left, will learn. The river overlook platform, below, is a fairly recent park addition.

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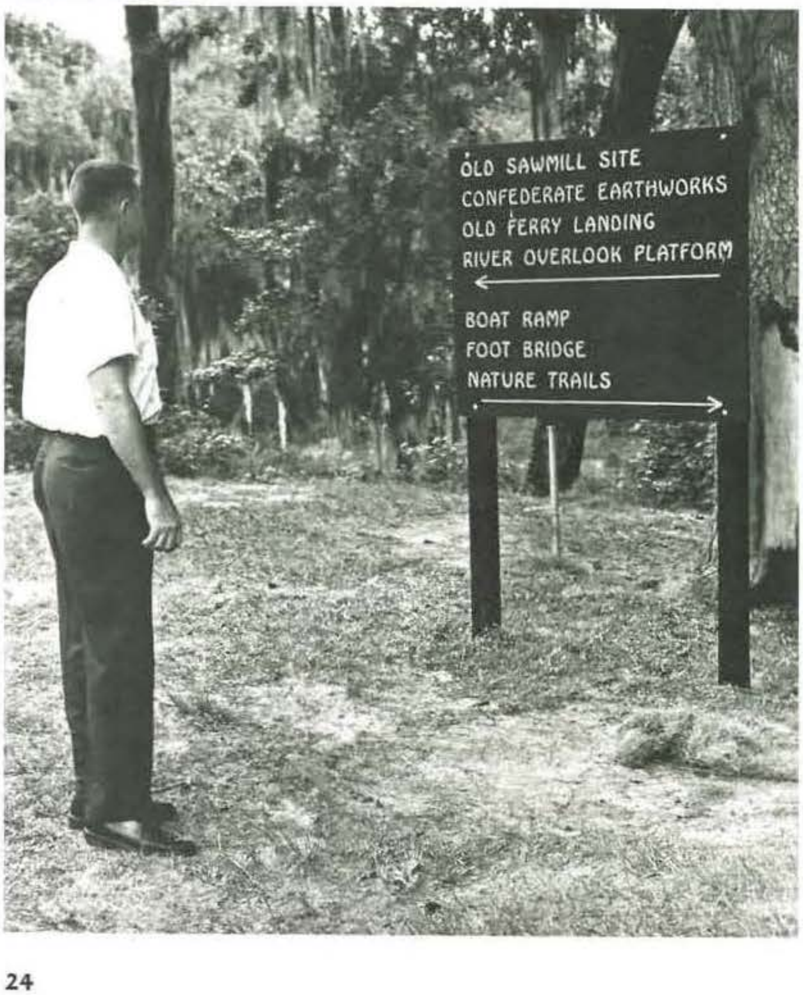
For boating visitors there's yet another treat: two rivers to cruise and explore instead of one. The Withlacoochee joins the Suwannee within the park, and both streams offer lovely scenery and good fishing for catfish, bream, and bass.

I first visited Suwannee River State Park 15 years back, and was immediately captivated by the serenity of its namesake and the beauty of its environs. It remains one of my favorite camping and picnicking spots. In fact, just dropping in for a quiet walk around the grounds when I happen to be passing that way is like a pleasant visit with an old friend. ●

Photos By Gene Smith



Shooting the Souvenirs

converting military arms to target and hunting weapons can be cheap and easy, or it can be an expensive, involved proposition

By EDMUND McLAURIN

WHEN A WAR ENDS, souvenir weapons are usually brought home by American servicemen. Similarly, untold thousands of military model rifles and handguns are declared surplus and disposed of on the open market. No one knows exactly how many surplus Mauser, Springfield and Enfield bolt-action rifles—not to mention the semiautomatic military rifle models of World War II—have reached American sportsmen's hands and been customized into fine hunting rifles or simply kept and used "as is."

Imports have been curtailed by Federal law, but as yet there is no acute shortage. Thousands of good military bolt-action rifles, as well as models declared surplus and marketed by our own government, remain on the market. One has only to scan the pages of THE SHOTGUN NEWS (Hastings, Nebraska 68901), "The Trading Post For Anything That Shoots," to realize that countless thousands of serviceable military rifles still exist. Many now in the hands of private owners are still virtually in mint condition. Their owners merely have to be found and induced to sell. It is also possible to find excellent condition war surplus rifles among commercial suppliers. One has only to be a determined and careful buyer.

There is no likelihood of actual scarcity during our lifetime. When a particularly desired rifle model cannot be found in home state stores, a classified ad in one of the semimonthly issues of THE SHOTGUN NEWS will get you one. Under Federal law, interstate shipment of guns cannot be made directly to you, but arrangement can be made with a Federally licensed dealer to accept shipment. Usually, only a nominal charge is made for this service and tied-in mechanical inspection.

To their credit, most military rifles built on the Mauser, Springfield and Enfield types of actions reflect good mechanical design. Those in excellent condition offer the potential of conversion into good sporting rifles. Professional gunsmiths have long used Mauser and Springfield actions, particularly, in making up beautiful—often expensive—hunting rifles.

Amateur gunsmiths long ago got in the game, too. In fact, so many have shown interest and sought information on military rifle modification that Williams Gun Sight Company (Davison, Michigan 48423) has for years been marketing an annually revised edition of How To CONVERT MILITARY RIFLES. Among gun book titles, it is a perennial best seller. The book is a veritable treasure trove of work step ideas for remodeling a military rifle for sporting use, whether one wishes to spend the minimum or convert without consideration of total expense.

Basic modification work steps are given for the German Mausers models 98, 96, 95, 94 and 91, U. S. Springfield 1903, U.S.A. 1917 Enfield, .30-40 caliber Krag and 6.5 Norwegian Krag, British S.M.L. models 4 and 5 Enfields, Russian 7.62, Japanese Ariska, 7.5 Swiss Model 1911, 6:5 Italian Carcano, and the more modern .30M1 Garand and .30M1 Carbine autoloaders. Suitable accessories are also listed.

The magazine-form guidebook, together with careful public library reference reading of gunsmith Roy Dunlap's GUNSMITHING should give you all the basic technical information you need. Another reference text is the HOME GUNSMITHING DIGEST, to be found in gun shops and sporting goods stores.

Usually it takes a minimum of 10 full hours of deliberate elementary gunsmithing to modify a military rifle into a useful sporter, with improved stock, action, and sights.

Many practical and "dress up" accessories are available that were specifically made or are otherwise adaptable for use on various military rifles. Included are ready-made stocks, reshaped bolts, improved trigger and firing pin assemblies, recoil pads and decorative pistol grip caps, identically shaped but fancily engraved floor plates, and sling swivels. By their use, home gunsmithing is reduced to the minimum.

As I know from experience with converting military weapons, one can spend little or nothing above the cost of a rifle's acquisition, or a lot. In cases of advanced conversion, total cost can easily exceed the price tag of a modern ready-made commercial sporting firearm. Winchester stressed that fact in its national advertising some years ago, in effort to keep the military rifle conversion craze from seriously affecting company sales. It was needless worry and effort. Today, Winchester knows that the average rifleman wants *both* types.

The American Springfield Model 1903 and 1917 Model Enfield, and the German Mauser military bolt-actions have long been popular choices for conversion into sporter form. Their actions are quite similar. In fact, our Springfield Model 1903 rifle was

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first cousin to the Mauser. The United States paid $200,000 for the privilege of using the Mauser's basic mechanical design.

As a general rule, our prewar Springfields were more carefully made and assembled than those of speeded-up wartime production. However, any Rock Island arsenal-made Springfield above serial number 319,921, and any Springfield armory issue above serial number 1,275,767, possesses a receiver made from nickel steel or equally strong chrome-nickel-molybdenum steel. The same holds true of rifles made under special wartime contracts given Remington Arms Company and the Smith-Corona typewriter people.

World War I American-made Enfield receivers and bolts, regardless of serial number, were all made from nickel steel, and consequently can be relied on to safely handle the high breech pressures developed by modern .30-06 ammunition.

Unfortunately, the now-obsolete U.S.A. Model 1917 Enfield rifle is so ugly that it seldom can be made into a thing of beauty, short of radical conversion.

An objectionable mechanical feature is the cocking of the action on the closing stroke of the bolt. Desirably, a center fire bolt-action rifle should cock on the rearward movement of the bolt as it is activated for cartridge pick-up and feeding. Fortunately, this fault of mechanical operation can be easily remedied by substituting a bolt conversion unit that you can install yourself in a couple of minutes. Numerich Arms Corp., West Hurley, New York 12491, is the supplier. The conversion kits are made specifically for 1914 and 1917 Remington and Winchester-manufactured Enfields, so when ordering be sure to state the manufacturer and which year model you have.

Many U.S.A. Enfields have been made into fine sporters, but invariably the work entails many man-hours and considerable money. I have a beautiful conversion—but the finished job cost me heavily in both categories.

A far better choice of military rifle model for conversion is one of the German 98 Mausers, Argentine Model 91 Mauser, or Springfield Model 1903—especially a rifle made prior to World War II, when closer attention was given to quality production.

The fine, strong Mauser action, however, does have one feature that usually causes annoyance.

With an unaltered Mauser action, cartridges must first be loaded into magazine, then each is fed into the rifle chamber during the forward thrust of the bolt. If magazine loading is by-passed and a cartridge is inserted directly into the chamber, the bolt will not fully close and lock. Frequently such a cartridge will fit tightly in the deeply recessed, tapered chamber, and prove impossible to loosen and extract without inserting a cleaning rod from the muzzle end and tapping it out.

The safety on military rifles of basic Mauser design is one of the best. However, it is only reliable when the safety lever is correctly flipped to full "On" position. Whereas most rifle safeties merely block the trigger, leaving the striker vulnerable to separation from the cocked sear, in case of a jar, the safety incorporated in Mauser rifle actions (and our Springfield Model 1903) cams the cocking piece entirely clear of the sear when the safety lever is turned to the full "On" position.

The .30M1 Carbine was produced to meet the U. S. military need for a lightweight autoloading shoulder weapon of easily maintained firepower. The World War II production rifle was as homely as mud, generally sloppy of mechanical action, and possessed only average accuracy. But the .30M1 Carbine fulfilled its military need admirably.

It is unlikely that Winchester, original producer of the military .30M1 Carbine, visualized its eventual use as a sporting firearm, but war surplus .30M1 Carbines, as well as various commercial facsimiles, now have wide popularity among sportsmen.

Although it lacks power and long-range effectiveness for serious deer hunting, the .30M1 Carbine is fun to shoot. The little rifle is fast-handling and fast-firing. Recoil is light, and ammunition—as made for military use and subsequently declared surplus—is plentiful and relatively cheap. Remington, Winchester, Federal, and Norma all make commercial .30M1 Carbine sporting ammunition with soft lead hunting-type bullet. (Most states, including Florida, prohibit the use of solid, hard-nosed military ammunition for hunting.)

As a publicity pitch, the Williams Gun Sight Company once custom built 50 .30M1 Carbines for retail sale. Each consisted of a selected .30M1 action and barrel assembly fitted to a custom, thumb hole-grip, Mannlicher-style stock designed by Reinhart Fajen, famous gunstock maker of Warsaw, Missouri.

All metal surfaces were attractively blued, and the Army-issue cartridge clip was reduced to 5-shot capacity for improved appearance.

The military receiver sight was replaced by one with precision adjustments and positive locking. An ivory bead front sight on a 9/32" matted ramp completed the sighting equipment.

Sling swivels were added to the tastefully checkered and hand-finished stock, and a carved leather sling was put on.

The customized rifles sold like hot cakes at a diner close to a popular public hunting area.

In my opinion, the .30M1 military carbine is one of the easiest military rifle models to sporterize. The drawback is that your efforts will produce only a fun gun—not one of practical value for big game hunting.

A semi or completely finished sporter stock can be ordered from Reinhart Fajen in your choice of three styles, with or without sling swivels and sling. I personally prefer the "Sportsman" version.

All three of the Fajen stocks are designed to accept the original issue .30M1 hand guard. The "Sportsman" model uses an outside barrel band to hold the hand guard and barrel assembly in place.

Sporting-type sights for the carbine can be had from Williams and Lyman gun sight companies.

Any refinishing of metal parts should be left to a professional. Some of the original military issue .30M1 Carbine trigger guards were castings, but others were made so hard that they do not readily accept nitrate chemical bluing and must first be black chromed.

At the time of purchase, and at intervals throughout its active life, a war surplus military rifle definitely should be given a headspace check to assure safety. Some of the war surplus rifles now being offered for sale do not have their original bolts.

Headspace in rifles of a caliber that utilizes a rimless cartridge—like the Springfield Model 1903, U.S.A. Enfield and various foreign military Mausers—is measured with a special hardened steel gauge that looks much like a cartridge with a blunt-nose bullet. When making a headspace check, the gunsmith first removes the firing pin and extractor assembly from the bolt or breech-block body.

A bolt-action rifle is considered to be within safe operational headspace tolerance if the locking bolt *will* gently close on either a "Go" or "No go" size headspace gauage. It is a dangerous weapon to fire if the bolt will close on a gauge of "Field" designation.

If you are already experiencing poor accuracy, split cases, or powder blowbacks, your firearm requires immediate attention. Have a professional gunsmith check its headspace and possibly refit the bolt or breechblock.

Most military rifles have a two-stage trigger pull, with considerable slack. Many are downright sloppy in performance.

A professional gunsmith familiar with military model actions can polish critical trigger-sear contact points for notably smoother trigger performance.

An alternative is to substitute a complete, improved design trigger assembly. No specialized gunsmithing is involved; installation can be made with ordinary tools.

Makers of trigger assemblies for various military models, and for certain models of American sporting rifles, are Timney Manufacturing Company, Denver, Colorado 80216; Dayton-Traister Company, Edmonds, Washington 98020; and Paul Jaeger, Inc., Jenkintown, Pennsylvania 19046. Their wares offer an easy solution to the problem of poor trigger performance.

In the last issue I referred to various big game and .22 caliber rifle models that could be teamed to give closely related balance and feel in a shooter's hands, so that practice with one would complement use of the other.

For the big game hunter who prefers an autoloading action, and who also likes to hunt small game and shoot breakable targets with a .22, I now recommend serious consideration of teamed Winchester Model 100 autoloading big game rifle and one of the new Winchester Model 490 autoloading .22 caliber rifles.

The reason no mention was made in last month's column was that, at the time, Winchester had not announced the .22 caliber twin of the widely used Model 100 big game rifle.

Ironically, in announcing the new Model 490 .22 autoloader in its 1974 catalog, Winchester has dropped its listing of the Model 100 big game rifle, long made in .243 and .308 Winchester calibers! However, there are plenty of Model 100's still available. Readers who don't have a Model 100, and want one, should have no difficulty in getting it. I have just visited four local sporting goods stores or gun shops. Every one had one or more Model 100s still in stock.

Those who already own the Model 100 should be happy to know they can now add an inexpensive-to-use .22 rifle of almost identical appearance and feel.

The new Model 490 .22 caliber autoloading rifle, like the Model 100 big game version, comes with a 22-inch tapered barrel and has similar clip-type magazine loading and side ejection of fired cases. Even the length is approximately the same—42 inches for the .22 rim fire Model 490, and 42½ inches for the Model 100 center fire.

Quite likely, a receiver peep sight—such as the Williams FP-100 and the Lyman 66-W-88—originally designed for use on the Winchester Model 100 big game rifle will also fit the receiver of the new look-alike Model 490 .22.

The new Model 490 complements the Model 100 every bit as well as the Winchester Model 9422 .22 caliber lever-action rifle ideally teams with the popular Winchester Model 94 lever-action big game rifle in appearance, mechanical action, and feel in one's hands.

Depending on the shooter's preference—autoloader or lever-action—either combination can be considered logical choice for a matched set of Winchester hunting rifles. ●

★ national
★ hunting &
★ fishing day
September 28, 1974

Understanding Antihunting

ONE OF THE MAJOR OBSTACLES to successful counteraction of antihunting sentiment has been a lack of knowledge about the causes and influences which adversely affect a person regarding the sport.

A recently completed study financed by the National Rifle Association's grant-in-aid program has shed considerable light on the subject.

Dale L. Shaw, a Ph.D. candidate at Colorado State University, recently submitted his dissertation, "The Hunting Controversy: Attitudes and Arguments." As part of his study, Shaw hand-delivered written questionnaires to 937 students from 10 colleges and universities selected at random from across the nation.

From the results of the questionnaire ". . . three-fourths of those questioned held some degree of antihunting or antihunter sentiment. Major objections voiced related to trophy hunting, wasting of game meat, endangering of species, hunters killing more than the legal limit, and hunting for sport or pleasure instead of a need for meat.

"Influences initiating or reinforcing antihunting or antihunter sentiment, in order of magnitude, were television, personal experiences, parents, movies, magazines, and friends," reported Shaw.

"Increasing antihunting sentiment, in general, appears to be related to urbanization, disassociation with the land, and a trend toward the adoption of a preservationist philosophy toward all natural resources. A combination of these factors is resulting in a change in social values in our society away from consumptive use and toward appreciative uses of all things wild."

Although 76 per cent of the students expressed some degree of antihunting sentiment by vote, sport hunting won approval of the students by a margin of four to one among males and six to four among females. Students from large population centers voted against hunting far more than did those from rural areas.

Looking at the reasoning behind the antihunting sentiment, Shaw ranked the reasons as follows:

1. "Sport hunting endangers some species." (66%)
2. "I don't believe in trophy hunting." (65%)
3. "I don't believe in hunting for pleasure or sport." (57%)

A total of 20 reasons were ranked according to frequency of response. There was practically no antigun sentiment.

In the area of media influence, 38 per cent listed television, with mention of programs such as *Wild Kingdom, American Sportsman,* the clubbing of baby seals, *National Geographic* specials, Disney programs, Jacques Cousteau, *Lassie,* and news programs, in order of frequency.

Photo By Bill Hansen

A fifth of the students said movies had created or reinforced their antihunting views, with mention, in order of frequency, of *Bless The Beasts and Children,* Disney movies (including *Bambi*), *Born Free, Deliverance,* and *Alaskan Safari.*

Eighteen per cent of the students listed sporting magazines, *National Geographic, Life,* and *Time* as publications having some influence on their antihunting beliefs.

Shaw concluded that antihunting sentiment (philosophically) is not overly strong, but antihunter sentiment may be posing a serious threat to the sport. Hunter disregard for ethics and the rights of property owners is significantly damaging when carried on to any degree.

In a personal communication with Cliff Morrow, secretary of the NRA's grant-in-aid committee, Shaw stated that ". . . A problem equal to this, or even greater, is getting hunters and game management people to accept the fact that hunter misbehavior may be the real threat. My experience . . . is that most individuals, when told this, become so defensive that they immediately refuse to consider that it might be true."

Shaw's dissertation concludes by recommending that individuals and organizations on both sides of the controversy should refrain from emotionalism, misinformation, and name-calling.

Colleges and universities which teach wildlife management should place adequate emphasis on management which results in wildlife benefits for all people and not just the hunter.

Nonhunters' needs should be recognized by policy-makers and efforts should be made to better meet these needs.

Other recommendations supported better public education in wildlife management; better self-policing of the sportsmen's ranks; better hunter licensing procedures; improved law enforcement; and increased penalties for game law violations. ●

Photo By Gene Smith

scientific data collected now will be invaluable. . . .

For the Future

By MORRIE NAGGIAR

IT IS A VENERABLE CUSTOM of the older members in most sporting circles to regale one another with tales of an earlier and better day. In their yarns at least, vast hordes of giant bass and other game fish swarmed in fretful eagerness to impale themselves on the fisherman's hook. And since we have been self-brainwashed to believe that things were somehow always much better way back when, most of us haven't been overly inclined to discount these stories.

Which isn't to say that fishing wasn't consistently better in earlier days. It probably was. There were fewer fishermen to share the available crop, for one thing. And the water was cleaner, hence more productive, because a smaller percentage of our waterways were subjected to the onslaught of wastes dumped in unhampered abandon by nearly anyone who had a mess of gunk to dispose of. But just how good "better" was will never really be known. The reason is simple: No one went to the trouble of compiling scientifically acceptable records of the fish populations that existed then.

Since the early 1950s, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission biologists have been aware of a continuous drop in the quality of sport fishing on many Florida lakes. As a first step in attempting to reverse this decline, some basic groundwork had to be done. In these early efforts an attempt was made to find out how many of what kinds of fish were present. The idea behind this approach, of course, is that it is vital to know what you have to start with in order to measure the success or failure of future efforts to maintain or restore good fish populations. During this phase of the work, little more than passing note was made of environmental factors that might have a bearing on the well-being of the fish.

In 1964, with financial backing provided by the Federal government under the sportsmen-financed Federal Aid to Fisheries Restoration Program, a more thorough look at the situation became possible. The Commission launched a major attempt to discover the chemical, physical, and biological features of selected Florida lakes that represented as much variety as possible. This program was identified in the manner of such work as F-17-R. Cooperating with the Commission in the effort was the U.S. Geological Survey.

Involved at first were 54 lakes scattered throughout the state. Activities were directed toward setting up from the data collected some basic general facts regarding these representative bodies of water with which to compare information being collected more intensively on a select group of lakes.

As such things have a way of turning out, some, but not all, of the broad and ambitious goals of the initial program were met. What did come out of this early work, however, was the realization that a modern fisheries research laboratory was a neces-

(*Continued on next page*)

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Photo By Bill Hansen

Biologist Chuck Starling, above, checks a water sample. A number of physical and chemical conditions were catalogued in compiling "base line" data. The Commission's fisheries research lab at Eustis, right, opened in 1967.

(Continued from preceding page)

sity if any volume of meaningful technical work was to be accomplished.

As a result, early in 1967, a modern, well-equipped fisheries research facility was put into service at Eustis. From the lake survey point of view, the acquisition of an up-to-date water chemistry laboratory and an able, qualified chemist, Phil Edwards, were especially good news. The cooperative agreement with the other agencies ended, and the Commission assumed the full responsibility for gathering and analyzing lake water quality data.

The survey program was now identified in federal aid jargon as F-21-R Water Quality Study. In common usage among project personnel and others associated with the work, it came to be known as the 100 lakes survey, even though somewhat more than that number of lakes were eventually involved.

Efforts of the survey were directed primarily toward establishing a measurement of the current physical, chemical, and biological situation on the hundred or so index lakes. This data would form a "base line" from which to measure deterioration or improvement in the condition of these and similar waters. Hopefully, for example, should the bass fishery of a lake go into a sudden drastic decline, there would be available data that, coupled with current information, would help pinpoint the problem.

By the time the fifth year of the project rolled around, the statewide water quality monitoring program had become a standardized, efficient operation.

The benefits of the water quality program have been many. It has provided an ample background of quality, technical data for dissemination and utilization by fisheries field managers and researchers alike, and for numerous other local, state, federal, and private agencies concerned with water and environmental quality—data which will never cease being useful. It has provided a continuing status report on most of the important fishing lakes in the state. And lastly, these data are available for more thorough, knowledgeable, and flexible interpretations of the interrelationships among aquatic communities in Florida lakes.

The 104 lakes included in the survey, in ascending order of eutrophication (based on turbidity, chlorophyll a, and particulate organic nitrogen), are listed below. The smaller the number, the better the water condition of the lake (1971-73 data).

Rank	Lake	County
1	Governor Hill	Dixie
2	Dead	Gulf
3	Kingsley	Clay
4	Winona	Volusia
5	Butler	Orange
6	Tarpon	Pinellas
7	Kerr	Marion
8	Minneola	Lake
9	Porter Pond	Washington
10	Brooklyn	Clay
11	Deer Point	Bay
12	Tracy	Polk
13	Geneva	Clay
14	Miami Canal & S. New River	Broward
15	Lowery (Sandhill)	Clay
16	Altho	Alachua
17	Santa Fe	Bradford
18	Tibet Butler	Orange
19	Crooked	Polk
20	Butler	Union
21	Palestine	Union
22	Jackson	Highlands
23	Miami Canal (Pump Sta. 8)	Broward
24	Dorr	Lake
25	Moon	Pasco
26	Francis	Highlands
27	Ocean Pond	Baker
28	Lindsey	Hernando
29	Jackson	Leon
30	Tsala Apopka (Hernando)	Hernando
31	Minnehaha	Lake
32	Louisa	Lake

Photo By Wallace Hughes

33	Alligator	Osceola
34	Ola	Orange
35	Miccosukee	Jefferson
36	Maitland	Orange
37	Tsala Apopka (Inverness)	Citrus
38	Cherry	Lake
39	Clear	Pasco
40	Rosalie	Polk
41	Johns	Orange
42	Letta	Highlands
43	Rodman (Sta. 8)	Putnam
44	Talquin	Gadsden
45	Tsala Apopka (Floral City)	Citrus
46	Koon	Lafayette
47	Weir	Marion
48	June-In-Winter	Highlands
49	Karick	Okaloosa
50	Mattie	Polk
51	E. Tohopekaliga	Osceola
52	Catherine	Lake
53	Sampson	Bradford
54	Wales	Polk
55	Red Beach	Highlands
56	South	Brevard
57	Alligator	Columbia
58	Virginia	Orange
59	Yale	Lake
60	Jessie	Polk
61	Gibson	Polk
62	Trafford	Collier
63	Panasoffkee	Sumter
64	Killarney	Orange
65	Weohyakapka	Polk
66	Bear	Santa Rosa
67	Blue Cypress	Indian River
68	Juliana	Polk
69	Orange	Alachua
70	Pierce	Polk
71	Webb Area	Charlotte
72	Starr	Polk
73	Rowell	Bradford
74	Okeechobee	Palm Beach
75	Istokpoga	Highlands
76	Kissimmee	Osceola
77	Reedy	Polk
78	Watertown	Columbia
79	Thonotosassa	Hillsborough
80	Marion	Osceola
81	Tohopekaliga	Osceola
82	Eloise	Polk
83	Alligator	Pinellas
84	Underhill	Orange
85	Lochloosa	Alachua
86	Seminole	Pinellas
87	Harris	Lake
88	Lawne	Orange
89	Newnans	Alachua
90	Eustis	Lake
91	Munson	Leon
92	Dora	Lake
93	Carlton	Lake
94	Griffin	Lake
95	Francis	Madison
96	Effie	Polk
97	Parker	Polk
98	Lulu	Polk
99	Beauclair	Lake
100	Hollingsworth	Polk
101	Hancock	Polk
102	Maggiore	Pinellas
103	Apopka	Orange
104	Scott	Polk

1974 Hunting Season Information 1975

Northwest Region

(Jefferson County westward, inclusive)

Deer: November 9 through January 19.

Turkey: No fall open season.

Quail and Squirrel: November 9 through March 2.

Northeast, Central, South and Everglades Regions

Deer:

November 9 through January 5, except—

In DeSoto, Hardee, Manatee and Sarasota counties—November 9 through 24 and December 7 through 29.

No open season in the Florida Keys of Monroe County.

Turkey:

November 9 through January 5, except—
In DeSoto, Hardee, Manatee and Sarasota counties—November 9 through 24 and December 7 through 29.

No fall open season in Alachua and Suwannee counties; or in that portion of Columbia County south of State Road 240 and west of State Road 47.

No fall open season in that portion of the Everglades Region lying south of Alligator Alley (State Road 84).

Quail and Squirrel:

November 9 through February 23.

No open season on fox squirrel in Lee, Hendry, Palm Beach, Monroe, Collier, Dade and Broward counties.

Statewide

Wild Hog:

November 9 through January 5.

In Palm Beach and Alachua counties, and in that portion of Levy County lying between the Suwannee and Withlacoochee rivers, generally bounded (north to south) by U.S. 27A, SR 337, lower SR 121, and U.S. 19-98, and including those lands lying north and east of U.S. 27A in R16E and belonging to International Paper Company.

In that portion of Collier, Dade and Monroe counties west of Levee 28, south of Alligator Alley (SR 84), north of the Everglades National Park boundary, and east of SR 29.

Bear:

Bear may be taken in Baker or Columbia counties, and on Tyndall Air Force Base in Bay County, during the established open season for taking deer; and by special permit on designated wildlife management areas. Limit 1 per season.

Turkey Gobbler: Spring Season

In that portion of the state lying south of State Road 50:
March 8 through March 23.
In that portion of the state lying north of State Road 50 to the eastern boundary of Jefferson County:
March 22 through April 6.
In the Northwest Region: March 29 through April 13.

Shooting Hours—Resident Game

One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset; except the Spring Gobbler Season, when shooting hours will be one-half hour before sunrise to 12-noon.

Archery Season (statewide)

September 7 through September 29

Legal Game—Deer of either sex (except fawn), bear (in Baker or Columbia counties, and on Tyndall AFB in Bay County), turkey, quail, squirrel, rabbit, and wild hog.

No open season in Broward or Dade counties; in that portion of Palm Beach County south of SR 80; in that portion of Hendry County east of L1 and L2 levees; or in Collier or Monroe counties south of U.S. Highway 41 (hunting permitted in the tract lying between U.S. 41 and Loop Road, SR 94).

The possession or use of firearms while hunting with bow and arrow during the archery season is prohibited. The taking of deer from airboats is prohibited during the archery season. Crossbows are prohibited. The use of any unleashed hunting dog by any person hunting with bow and arrow during the archery season is prohibited. Persons holding a valid archery permit in addition to a regular hunting license may hunt on designated wildlife management areas and on open lands during the established archery season.

Florida Hunting Licenses

Exempt—Residents 65 years of age and over and all children under 15.

Issued from County Tax Collector offices, and authorized subagents. Costs include issuing fees.

Servicemen, stationed in Florida, are considered residents of Florida insofar as licenses to hunt and fish are considered.

Resident, Annual	
Series AK—Hunting-Fishing Combination, Statewide	**$10.50**
Series K—State	**7.50**
Series I—Home County	**2.00**
Series J—Other than Home County	**4.50**
Non-Resident	
Series L—State, Annual	**26.50**
Series M—State, 10-day Continuous	**11.50**
Series M1—County, Annual, Owners of and paying taxes on 3000 acres land	**11.50**
Resident or Non-Resident, Annual	
Series H—For hunting on licensed private hunting preserves only	**5.50**
Archery Season Permit	**5.00**
Issued from Office of Commission, Tallahassee	
Series Y—Guide, required for guiding hunting parties	**10.00**
Alien Hunting	**50.00**

Bag Limits

	Daily Bag	Season Bag	Possession Limit
White-tailed Deer	2	3	2
Turkey—Fall	1	2	2
Spring	1	2	2
Squirrel, Gray	10		20
Squirrel, Fox	2		4
Quail	12		24
Rabbit	10		20
Wild Hog	1	2	2

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is available without charge, to any and all subscribers to Florida Wildlife Magazine, and their immediate families, who catch any of the fresh-water game fish of the prescribed species and size requirements. Citation, showing recorded date of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of the following application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

Only fishing citation applications received within 90 days from date of catch will be honored.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
SPECIES

LARGEMOUTH BASS	..........8 pounds or larger
CHAIN PICKEREL	..........4 pounds or larger
BLUEGILL (BREAM)	..........1 ½ pounds or larger
SHELLCRACKER	..........2 pounds or larger
BLACK CRAPPIE	..........2 pounds or larger
RED BREAST	..........1 pound or larger

All fish must be taken from the fresh waters of the state of Florida, as defined by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Fish must be caught on conventional fishing tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness.

The catch must be weighed and recorded at a fishing camp or tackle store within the state by the owner, manager, or an authorized agent of the respective establishment.

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE Date__________
Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

Please send me the Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation with the inscribed data listed below:

Name (please print)__________

Address __________

City__________ State__________ Zip No.__________

Species__________ Weight__________ Length__________

Type of Tackle__________

Bait or Lure Used__________

Where Caught__________ in__________ County

Date Caught__________ Catch Witnessed By__________

Registered, Weighed By__________ At__________

Signature of Applicant__________

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Photo By Lovett E. Williams, Jr.

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